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CHAPTER III
HINT

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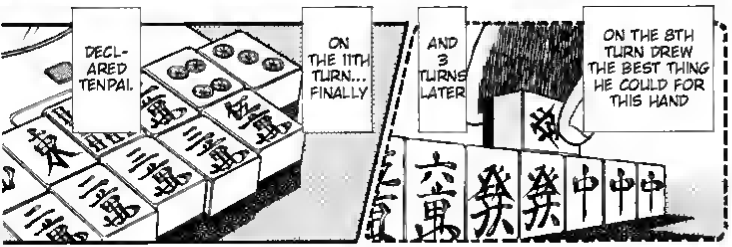
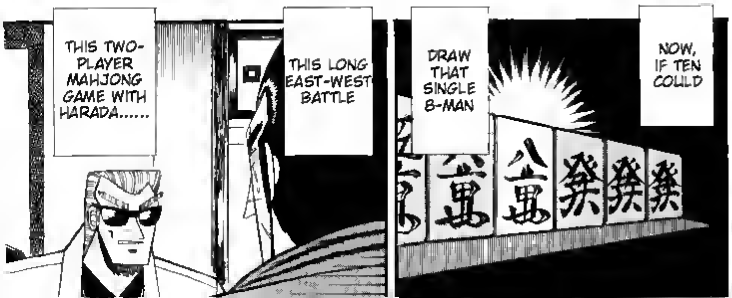
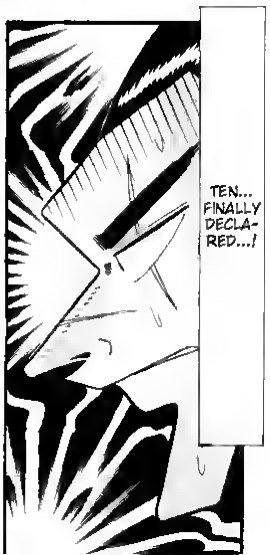

DECLARED TENPAI.
ON THE 11TH TURN... FINALLY
AND 3 TURNS LATER
ON THE 8TH TURN DREW THE BEST THING HE COULD FOR THIS HAND

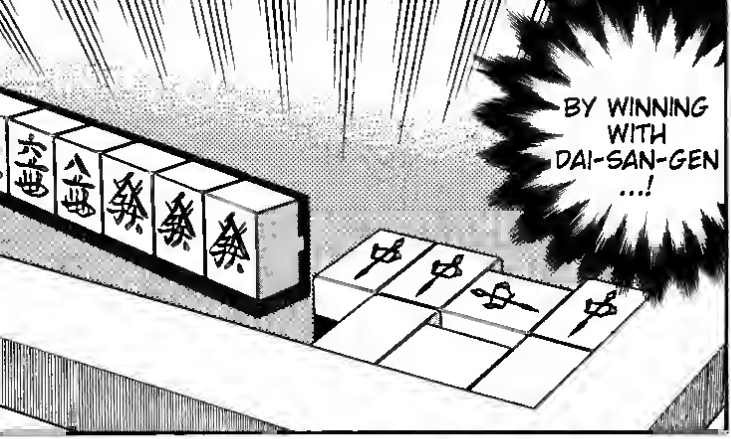

THIS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG GAME WITH HARADA.....
THIS LONG EAST-WEST BATTLE
DRAW THAT SINGLE 8-MAN
NOW, IF TEN COULD

TIME AFTER TIME HE PASSED ON THE CHANCE TO DECLARE

AND THEN.....
AND WAITED.
HE WAITED...


TEN... FINALLY DECLARED...!

WOULD BE FINISHED... WOULD HAVE TO BE FINISHED...!


BY WINNING WITH DAI-SAN-GEN ...!

HARADA WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO MAKE A COMEBACK.
IN THIS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG GAME
WITH THE ONE-HOUR LIMIT AND NO DEALING IN...
IF HE WON WITH A DEALER YAKUMAN

IT WOULD BE IMPOSS-IBLE...
THE FINAL MOMENT TO FINISH THIS EAST-WEST BATTLE...
THAT WAS HOW FAR HIS HAND HAD COME.
THAT WOULD BE NO EXAG-GERA-TION.
TEN... WOULD HAVE GAINED VICTORY FOR EAST.
TALENT...

THIS IS WHAT THEY CALL TALENT.....

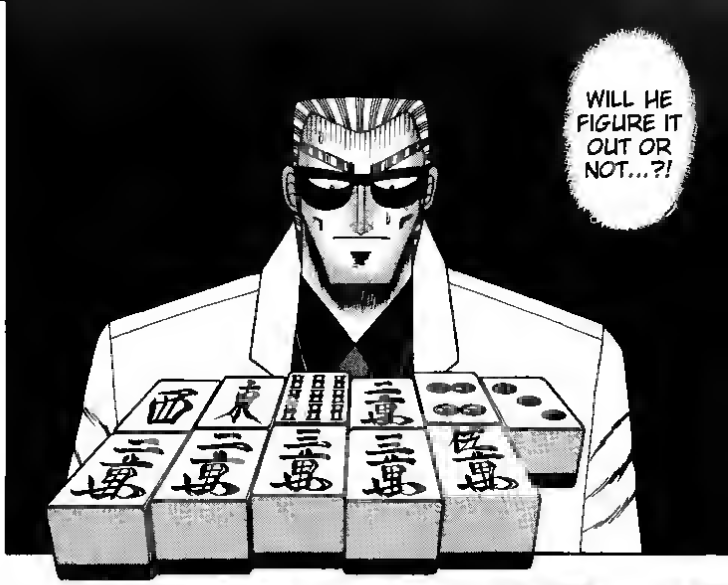
HE WOULDN'T GET INTO THIS TENPAI WITH AN 8-MAN SINGLE WAIT.
WITH JUST LUCK ALONE...
EVEN LUCK WON'T DO IT...
...JUST SKILL ISN'T ENOUGH...

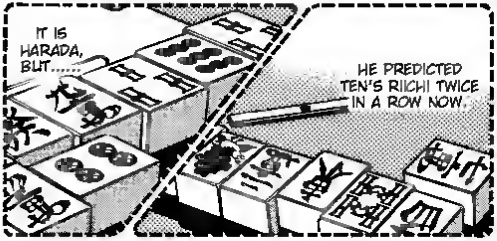
THAT SORT OF...
SURRENDERING TO YOUR OWN INSTINCTS...
THROWING AWAY ALL OF ONE'S OWN DESIRES
THE ABILITY TO SACRI-FICE ONE'S SELF...
IN THE END...

STRENGTH AS A PERSON
IS WHAT GOT HIM THIS HAND ...!
AGAINST HARADA...

JUST WAITING ON HARADA NOW...
HE HAS TO WIN
EAST WILL WIN ...!
WHAT WILL HARADA PREDICT FROM THESE DISCARDS ...?

IF HE DOES AND DRAWS THE 8-MAN
WILL HE BE ABLE TO AVOID DETECTION OR NOT...?

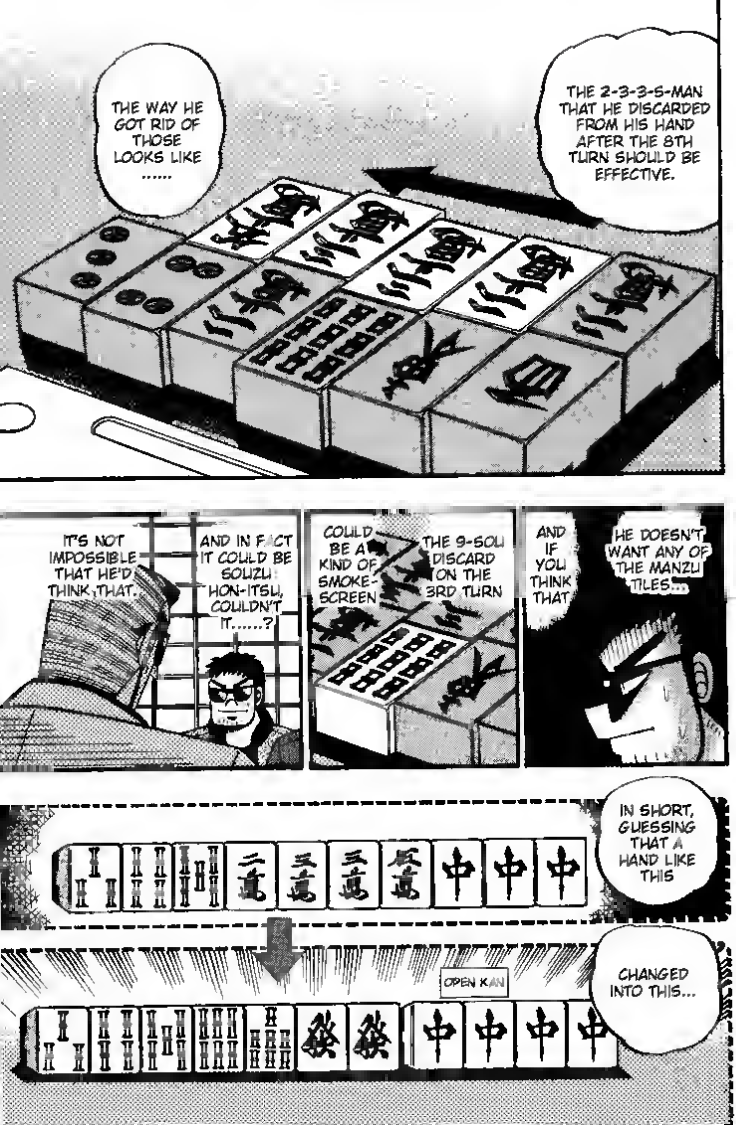

WILL HE FIGURE IT OUT OR NOT...?!


IT IS HARADA, BUT.....
HE PREDICTED TEN'S RICHI TWICE IN A ROW NOW.

HEH HEH ...

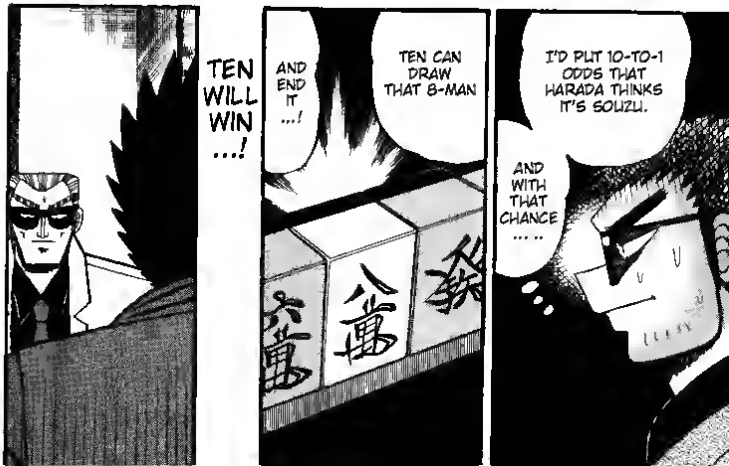
IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT TEN'S WAIT IS ON A MANZU 1 TILE.....
AT FIRST GLANCE, WITH THESE DISCARDS .....

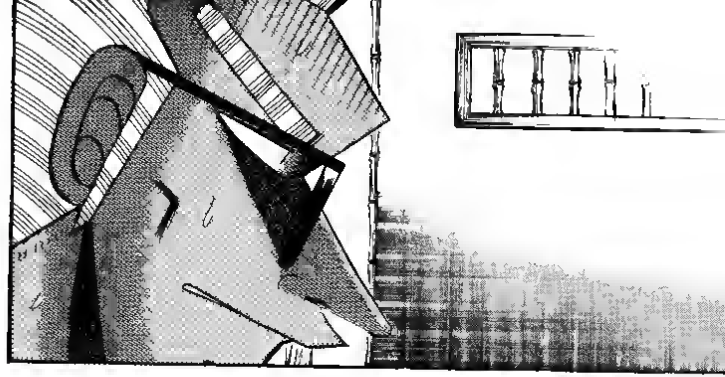
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE THAT EASY THIS TIME

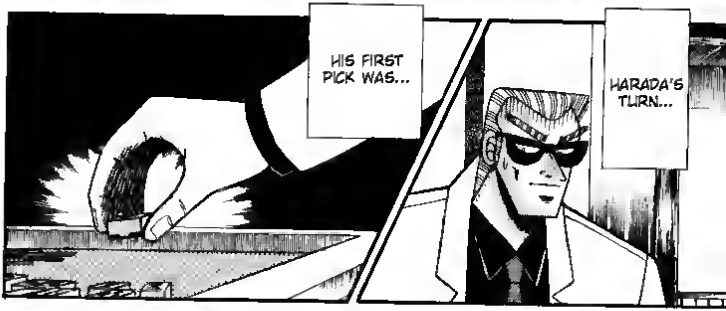

THE WAY HE GOT RID OF THOSE LOOKS LIKE .....
THE 2-3-3-5-MAN THAT HE DISCARDED FROM HIS HAND AFTER THE 8TH TURN SHOULD BE EFFECTIVE.
IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE'D THINK THAT.
AND IN FACT IT COULD BE SOUZU HON-ITSU, COULDN'T IT.....?
COULD BE A KIND OF SMOKE-SCREEN
THE 9-SOU DISCARD ON THE 3RD TURN
AND IF YOU THINK THAT
HE DOESN'T WANT ANY OF THE MANZU TILES...
IN SHORT, GUESSING THAT A HAND LIKE THIS
OPEN KAN
CHANGED INTO THIS...

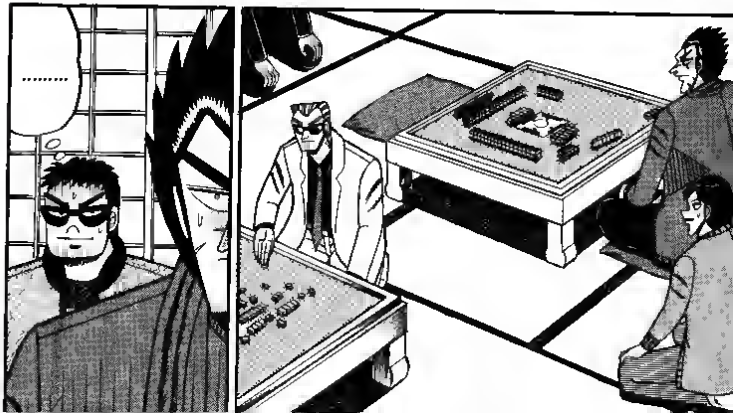
BETWEEN MANZU AND SOUZU... WHICH HON-ITSU TO GO FOR?
FROM A HAND WITH EQUAL WEIGHT ON BOTH
YOU COULD PREDICT HE DISCARDED ALL OF HIS MANZU
AND WENT WITH SOUZU .....

THAT'D BE THE USUAL PREDICTION ...!


I'D PUT 10-TO-1 ODDS THAT HARADA THINKS IT'S SOUZU.
AND WITH THAT CHANCE .....
TEN CAN DRAW THAT 8-MAN
AND END IT ...!
TEN WILL WIN ...!




HIS FIRST PICK WAS...
HARADA'S TURN...


.....

URGH ...!

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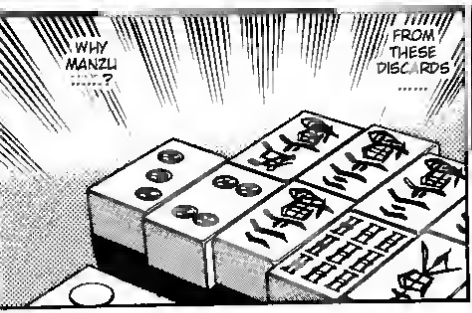
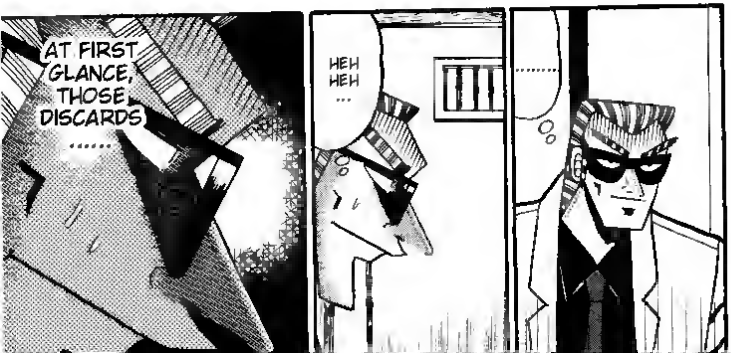
WHY WOULD HE THINK HIS WAIT WAS THAT .....
WHY...? MANZU ...?
THAT'S CRAZY ...!

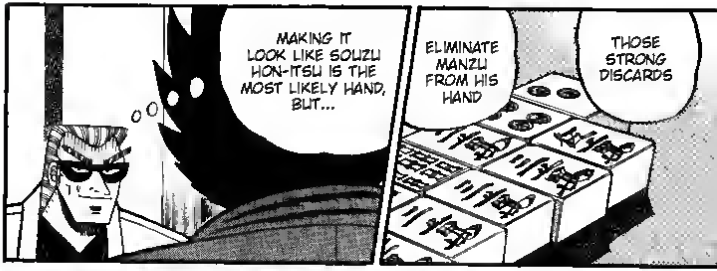
HOW DID HE FIGURE OUT IT'S MANZU...!?


WHY MANZU .....?
FROM THESE DISCARDS .....

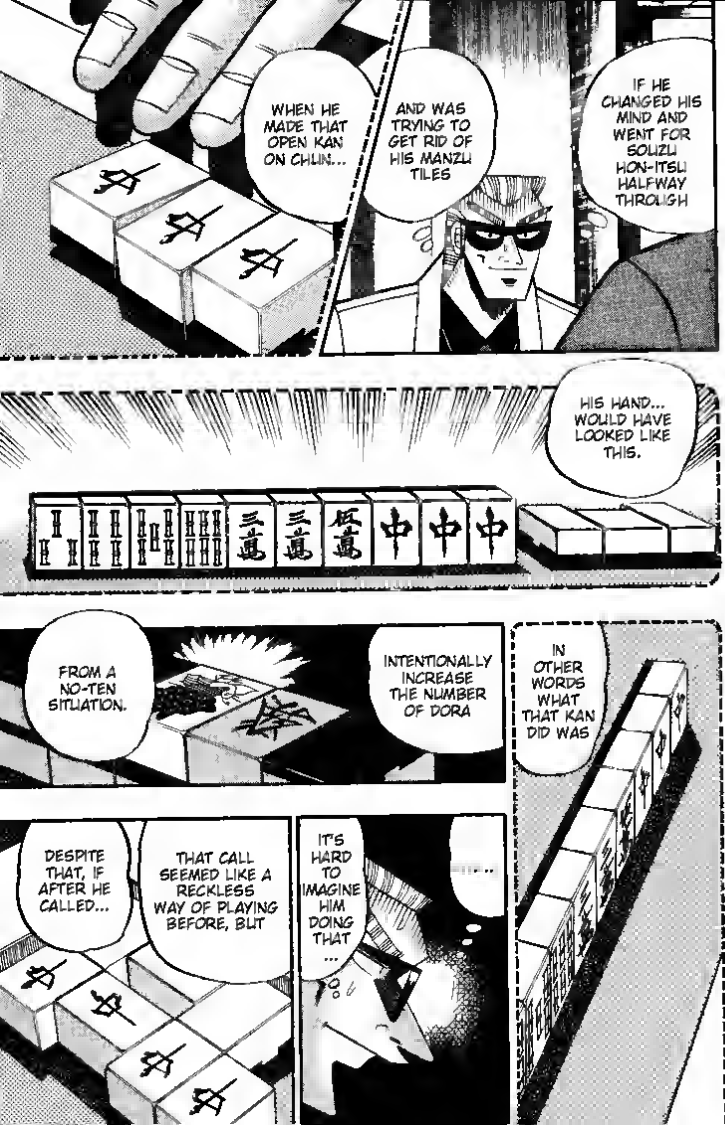
WHY DIDN'T HE THINK IT WAS SOUZU ...?

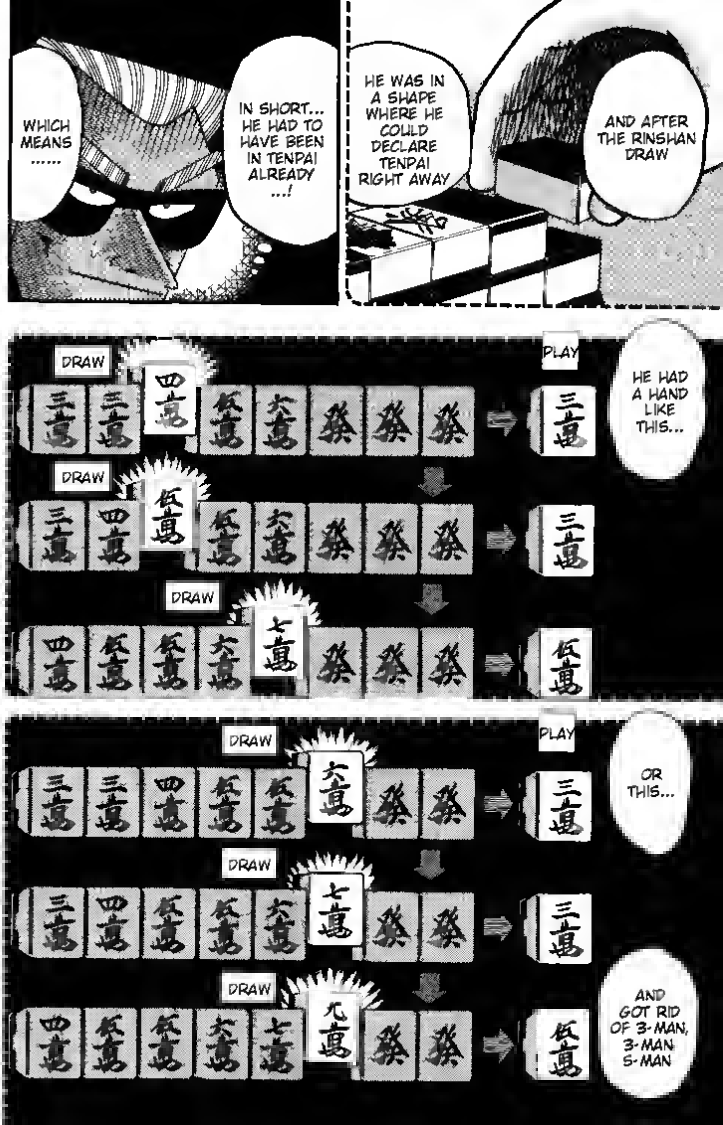

AT FIRST GLANCE, THOSE DISCARDS .....
HEH HEH ...
.....

MAKE IT LOOK LIKE IT'S NOT MANZU.....

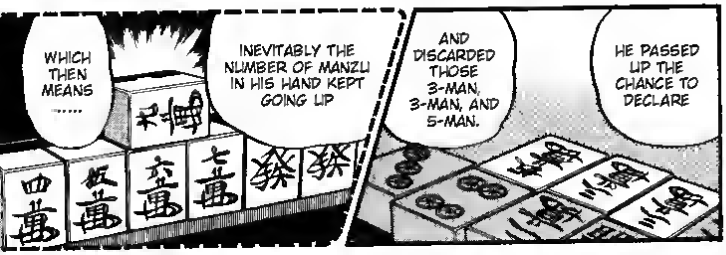

MAKING IT LOOK LIKE SOUZU HON-ITSU IS THE MOST LIKELY HAND, BUT...
ELIMINATE MANZU FROM HIS HAND
THOSE STRONG DISCARDS

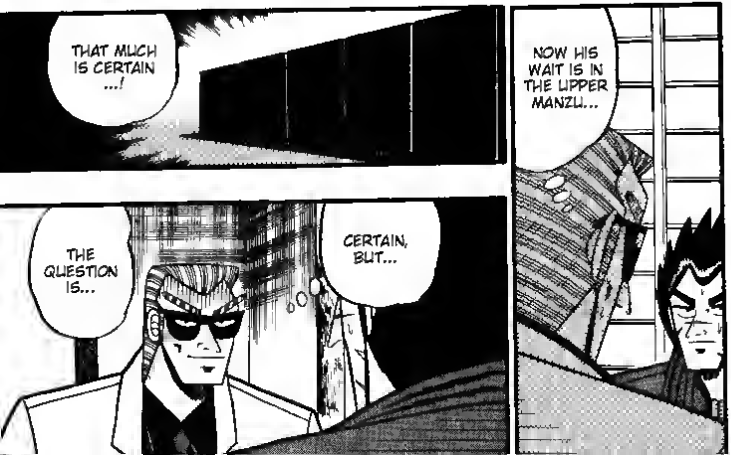
BECAUSE .....
IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT HAPPENING .....
THAT'S WRONG ...!

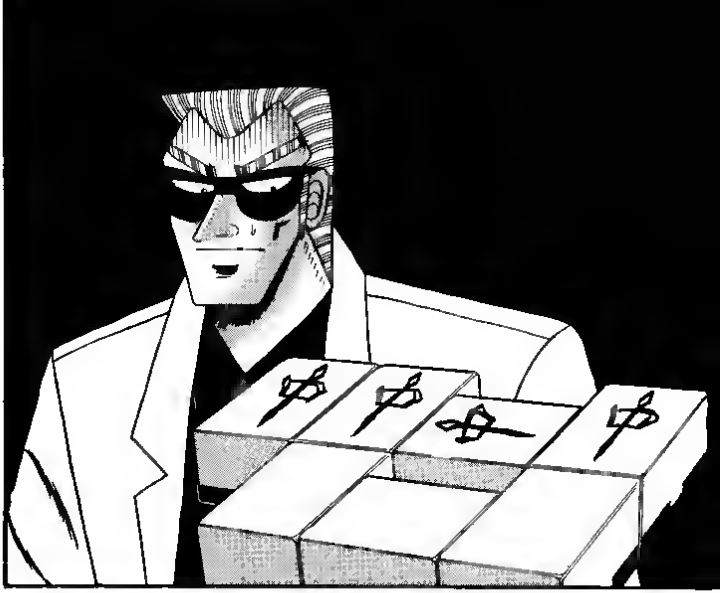

WHEN HE MADE THAT OPEN KAN ON CHUN...
AND WAS TRYING TO GET RID OF HIS MANZU TILES
IF HE CHANGED HIS MIND AND WENT FOR SOUZU HON-ITSU HALFWAY THROUGH
HIS HAND... WOULD HAVE LOOKED LIKE THIS.
FROM A NO-TEN SITUATION.
INTENTIONALLY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF DORA
IN OTHER WORDS WHAT THAT KAN DID WAS
DESPITE THAT, IF AFTER HE CALLED...
THAT CALL SEEMED LIKE A RECKLESS WAY OF PLAYING BEFORE, BUT
IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE HIM DOING THAT ...


WHICH MEANS .....
IN SHORT... HE HAD TO HAVE BEEN IN TENPAI ALREADY ...!
HE WAS IN A SHAPE WHERE HE COULD DECLARE TENPAI RIGHT AWAY
AND AFTER THE RINSHAN DRAW
DRAW
PLAY
HE HAD A HAND LIKE THIS...
DRAW
DRAW
OR THIS...
DRAW
AND GOT RID OF 3-MAN, 3-MAN 5-MAN

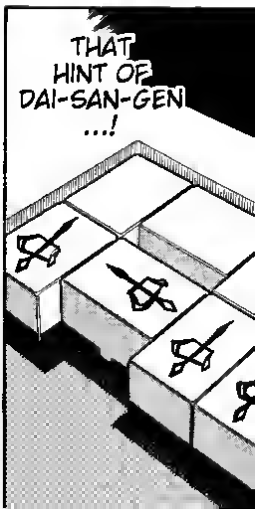
A HAND WITH A BAD WAIT...
IT KEPT TURNING INTO A WINNING HAND OR
BUT...
HE KEPT TENPAI WHILE CHANGING HIS HAND
THAT OPEN KAN ON CHUN WAS FROM TENPAI
THEN
AND AFTER THAT, TOO


WHICH THEN MEANS .....
INEVITABLY THE NUMBER OF MANZU IN HIS HAND KEPT GOING UP
AND DISCARDED THOSE 3-MAN, 3-MAN, AND 5-MAN.
HE PASSED UP THE CHANCE TO DECLARE


THAT MUCH IS CERTAIN ...!
NOW HIS WAIT IS IN THE UPPER MANZU...
THE QUESTION IS...
CERTAIN, BUT...



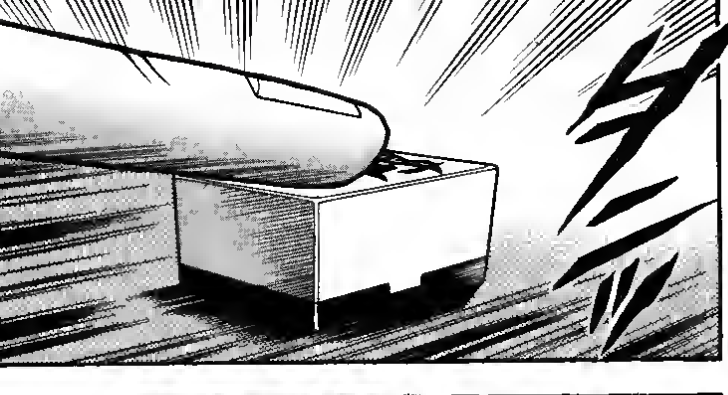
WHAT SHOULD I THINK ABOUT THAT...?

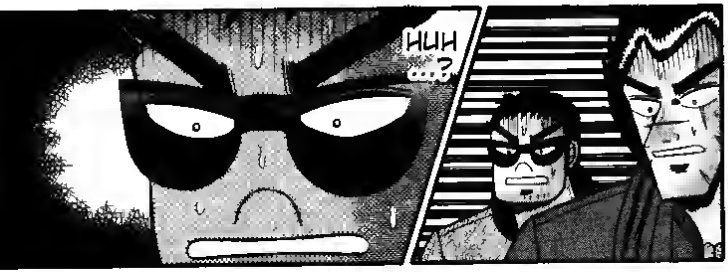

THAT HINT OF DAI-SAN-GEN ...!

IT'LL BE HATSU ...!
HE CAN'T SELECT MANZU.
FOR HIS NEXT TILE ...
EVEN IF HARADA HAS PREDICTED THE MANZU WAIT..
IN THE WORST CASE
IN SHORT...
HE HAS TO PICK HATSU.
RIGHT NOW
EVEN IF HE THINKS IT COULDN'T BE
AFTER SEEING THE CALL ON HAKU AND CHUN
TEN WILL GET A CHANCE TO DRAW.
WHICH MEANS THAT
THEY HAVE TO BE...
THE FIRST TWO TILES PICKED BY HARADA WILL BE WRONG .....!

HE JUST HAS TO DRAW 8-MAN...!
IN THOSE FIVE DRAWS

HE SHOULD BE WRONG ...!
HE'LL BE WRONG ...!




HUH ...?

MANZU... AGAIN ...!?
URGH ...!

ざわ…
WHY……!?
WHY ...!?
ざわ…
ざわ…

CHAPTER 112
AN IGNOBLE DEATH

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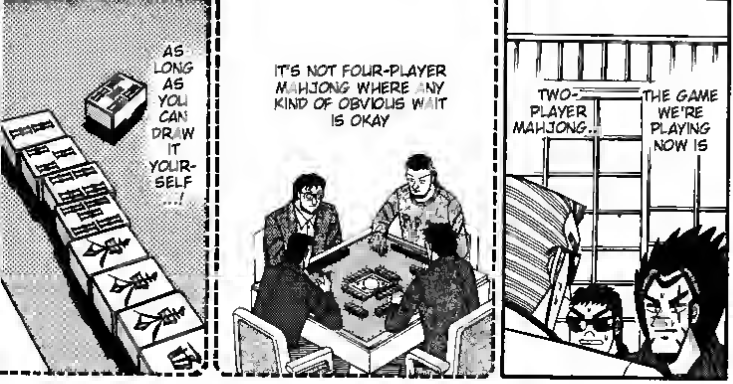
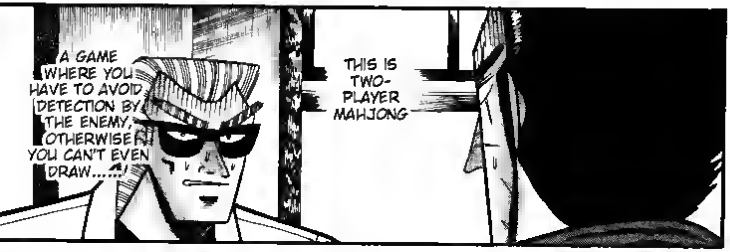
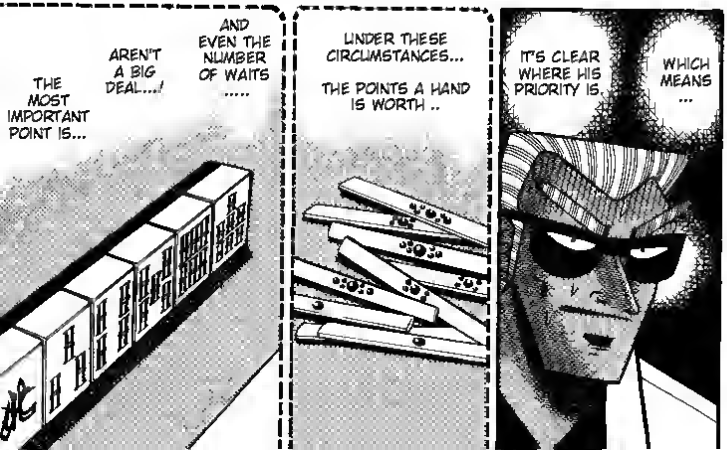
AND CONTINUING TO PICK...
WHY IS HE STICKING IT OUT
ISN'T HE WORRIED ABOUT DAI-SAN-GEN ...?
MANZU FOR TEN'S WAIT.....?
AFTER SEEING THAT OPEN HAKU AND CHUN
WHY DIDN'T HE PICK HATSU?
WHY IS IT MANZU ...!?

IT'S NOT HATSU .....!

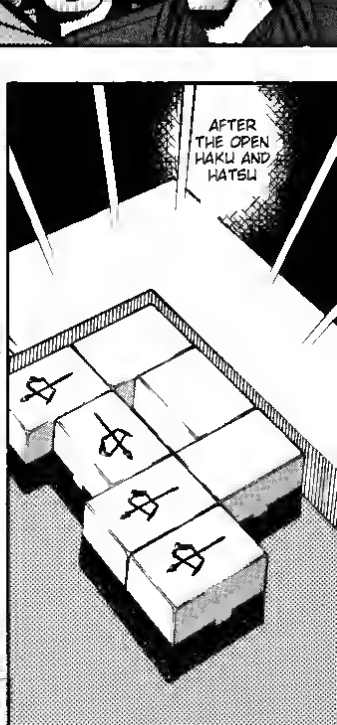

AS LONG AS YOU CAN DRAW IT YOUR-SELF ...!
IT'S NOT FOUR-PLAYER MAHJONG WHERE ANY KIND OF OBVIOUS WAIT IS OKAY
TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG..
THE GAME WE'RE PLAYING NOW IS


A GAME WHERE YOU HAVE TO AVOID DETECTION BY THE ENEMY, OTHERWISE YOU CAN'T EVEN DRAW.....!
THIS IS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG

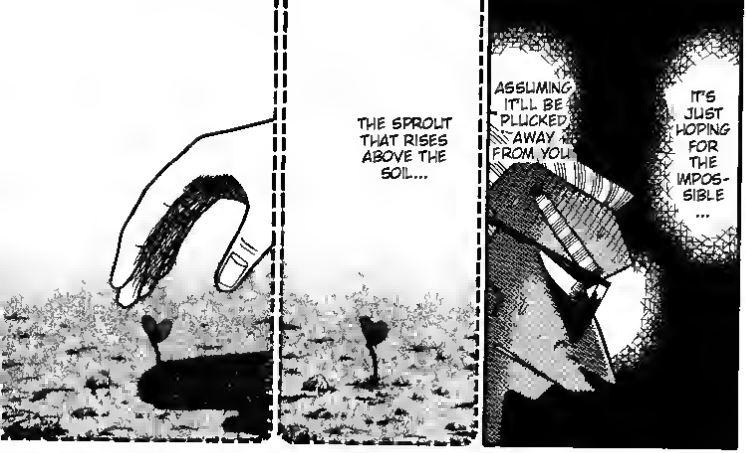

THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT IS...
AREN'T A BIG DEAL....!
AND EVEN THE NUMBER OF WAITS .....
UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES...
THE POINTS A HAND IS WORTH ..
IT'S CLEAR WHERE HIS PRIORITY IS.
WHICH MEANS ...

HE HAS TO MAKE IT UNCLEAR WHAT YAKU HIS HAND HOLDS...
AT LEAST... EVEN IF IT'S THROUGH INDIRECT MEANS
IN SHORT...
HIDING ITS TRUE FORM ...!
MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO PREDICT .....!

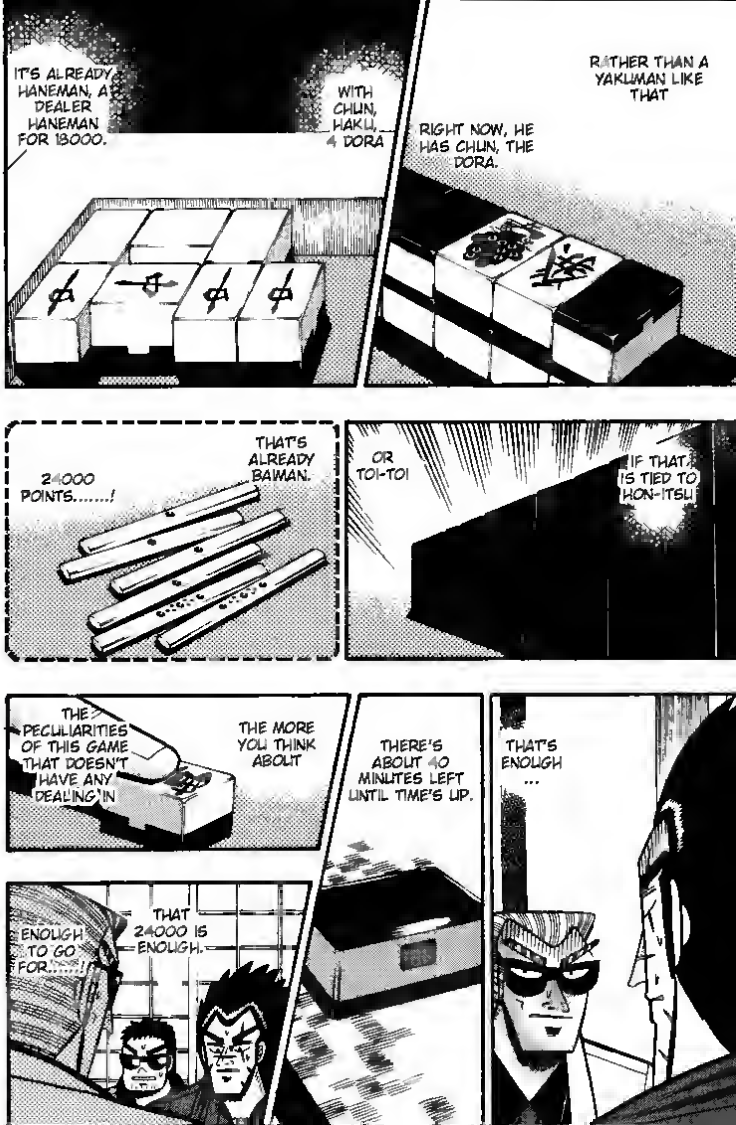
WAITING ON HATSU WOULD BE UNSPEAKABLE.


AFTER THE OPEN HAKU AND HATSU

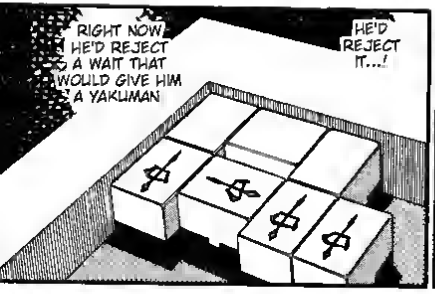
WHAT'S THE POINT IN GOING FOR AN OBVIOUS YAKUMAN LIKE THAT
DOING THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

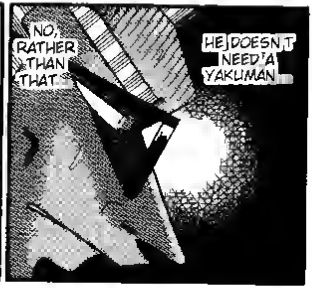

THE SPROUT THAT RISES ABOVE THE SOIL...
ASSUMING IT'LL BE PLUCKED AWAY FROM YOU
IT'S JUST HOPING FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE ...

WILL NEVER BLOSSOM INTO A FLOWER ...!

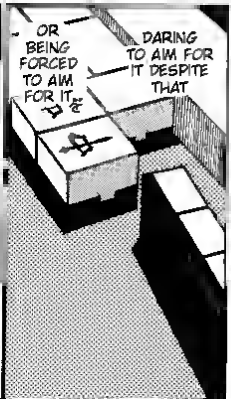

IT'S ALREADY HANEMAN, A DEALER HANEMAN FOR 18000.
WITH CHUN, HAKU, 4 DORA
RIGHT NOW, HE HAS CHUN, THE DORA.
RATHER THAN A YAKUMAN LIKE THAT
24000 POINTS.....!
THAT'S ALREADY BAIMAN.
OR TOI-TOI
IF THAT IS TIED TO HON-ITSU!
THE PECULIARITIES OF THIS GAME THAT DOESN'T HAVE ANY DEALING IN
THE MORE YOU THINK ABOUT
THERE'S ABOUT 40 MINUTES LEFT UNTIL TIME'S UP.
THAT'S ENOUGH ...
ENOUGH TO GO FOR.....!
THAT 24000 IS ENOUGH.

YES...!

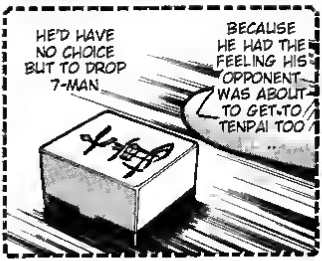

RIGHT NOW HE'D REJECT A WAIT THAT WOULD GIVE HIM A YAKUMAN
HE'D REJECT IT...!

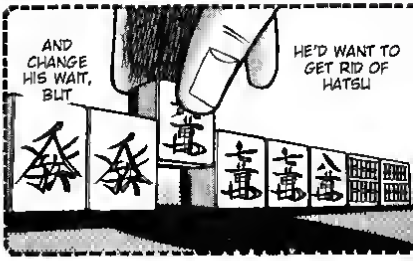

NO, RATHER THAN THAT
HE DOESN'T NEED A YAKUMAN

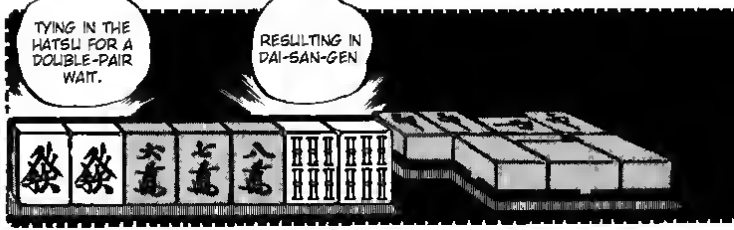
IN THE CASE WHERE THERE WERE NO OTHER CHOICES...!!
COULD HAPPEN EVENTUALLY...
IN SHORT ...


OR BEING FORCED TO AIM FOR IT
DARING TO AIM FOR IT DESPITE THAT

BY GETTING 6-MAN WITH A HAND LIKE THIS

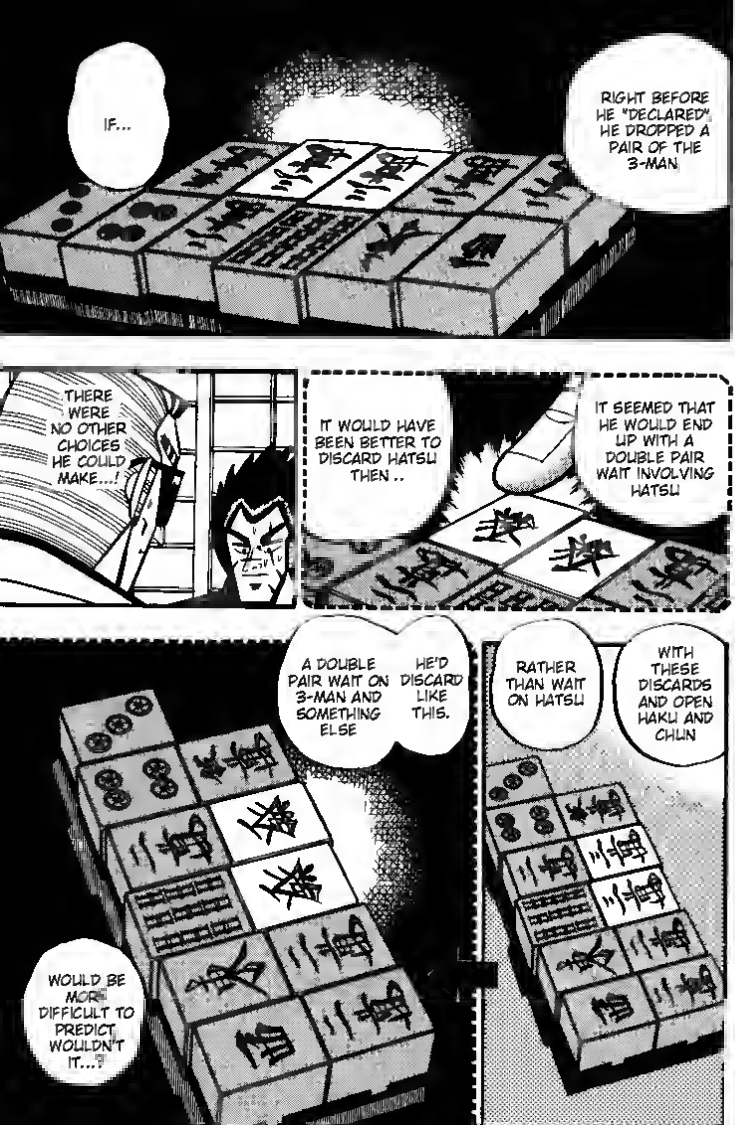

HE'D HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DROP 7-MAN
BECAUSE HE HAD THE FEELING HIS OPPONENT WAS ABOUT TO GET TENPAI TOO


AND CHANGE HIS WAIT, BUT
HE'D WANT TO GET RID OF HATSU

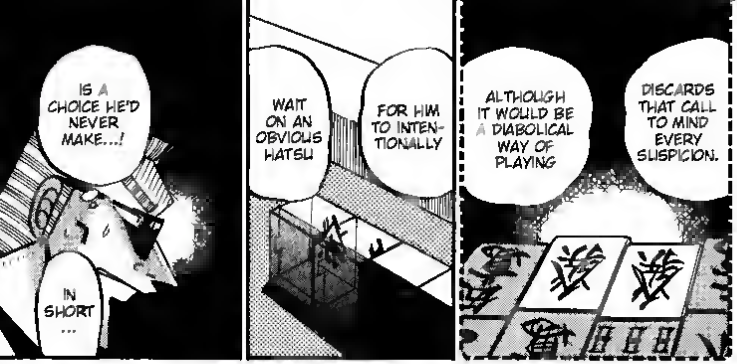

TYING IN THE HATSU FOR A DOUBLE-PAIR WAIT.
RESULTING IN DAI-SAN-GEN

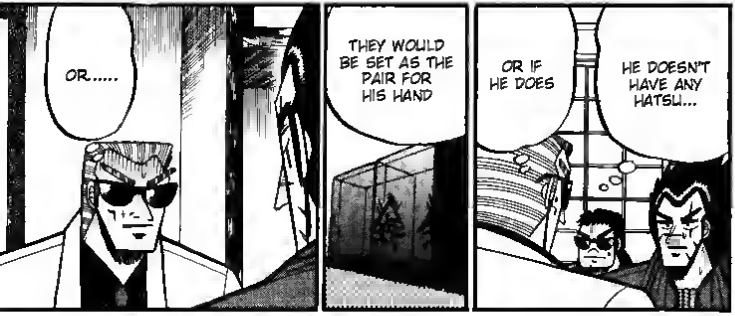
THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN

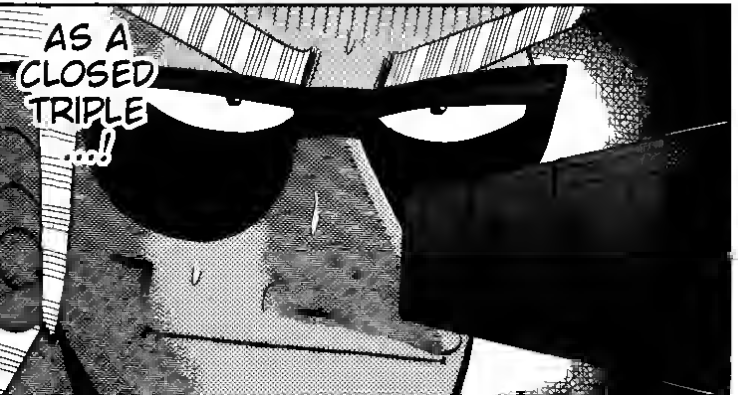
IN HIS CASE ...
THIS IS THE ONLY KIND OF SITUATION YOU COULD IMAGINE BUT...

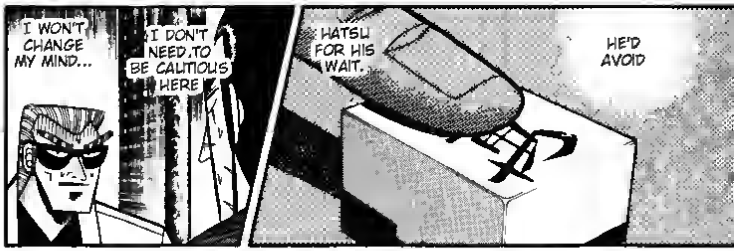

IF...
RIGHT BEFORE HE "DECLARED", HE DROPPED A PAIR OF THE 3-MAN.
THERE WERE NO OTHER CHOICES HE COULD MAKE...!
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO DISCARD HATSU THEN..
IT SEEMED THAT HE WOULD END UP WITH A DOUBLE PAIR WAIT INVOLVING HATSU
A DOUBLE PAIR WAIT ON 3-MAN AND SOMETHING ELSE
HE'D DISCARD LIKE THIS.
RATHER THAN WAIT ON HATSU
WITH THESE DISCARDS AND OPEN HAKU AND CHUN
WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT TO PREDICT, WOULDN'T IT...?

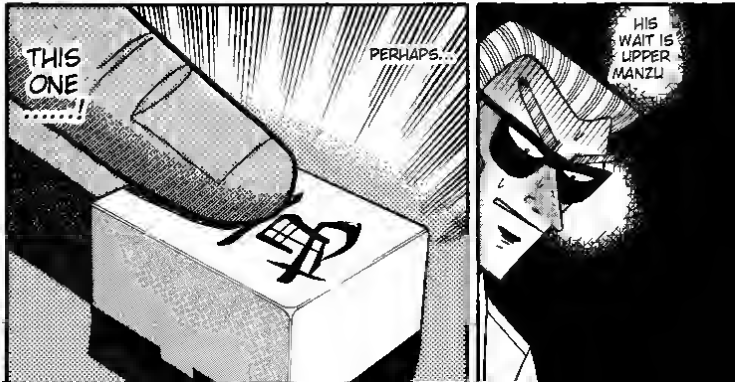
THE THOUGHTS OF THOSE STILL CLINGING TO FOUR-PLAYER MAHJONG
WOULD BE THROWN INTO CONFUSION.
IF HE HAD DISCARDED LIKE THAT
DISCARDS THAT GIVE OFF A STRANGE LIGHT.
WOULD BE ABSURD.
BY DROPPING A PAIR OF HATSU
CRUSHING THE SPROUT OF DAI-SAN-GEN
HON-ITSU OR TOI-TOI
OR ONLY CHUN AND HAKU, REJECTING THE OTHER YAKU.....
THAT COULD MAKE IT TSUU-II-SOU OR HON-ROU-TOU
IS TO DAZZLE THE EYES OF THE PERSON MAKING PREDICTIONS.
THAT FLASH
THE LIGHT OF AN ILLUSION


DISCARDS THAT CALL TO MIND EVERY SUSPICION.
ALTHOUGH IT WOULD BE A DIABOLICAL WAY OF PLAYING
FOR HIM TO INTENTIONALLY
WAIT ON AN OBVIOUS HATSU
IN SHORT ...
IS A CHOICE HE'D NEVER MAKE...!

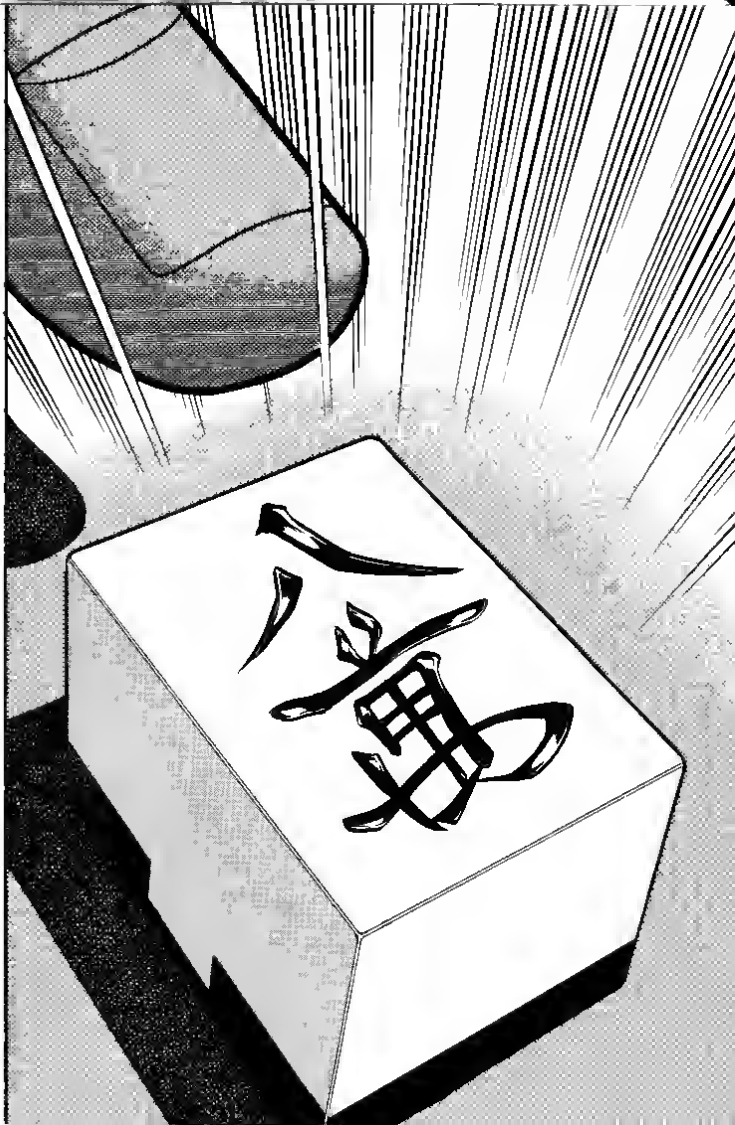

HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY HATSU...
OR IF HE DOES
THEY WOULD BE SET AS THE PAIR FOR HIS HAND
OR.....


AS A CLOSED TRIPLE ...!


I WON'T CHANGE MY MIND...
I DON'T NEED TO BE CAUTIOUS HERE.
HATSU FOR HIS WAIT.
HE'D AVOID

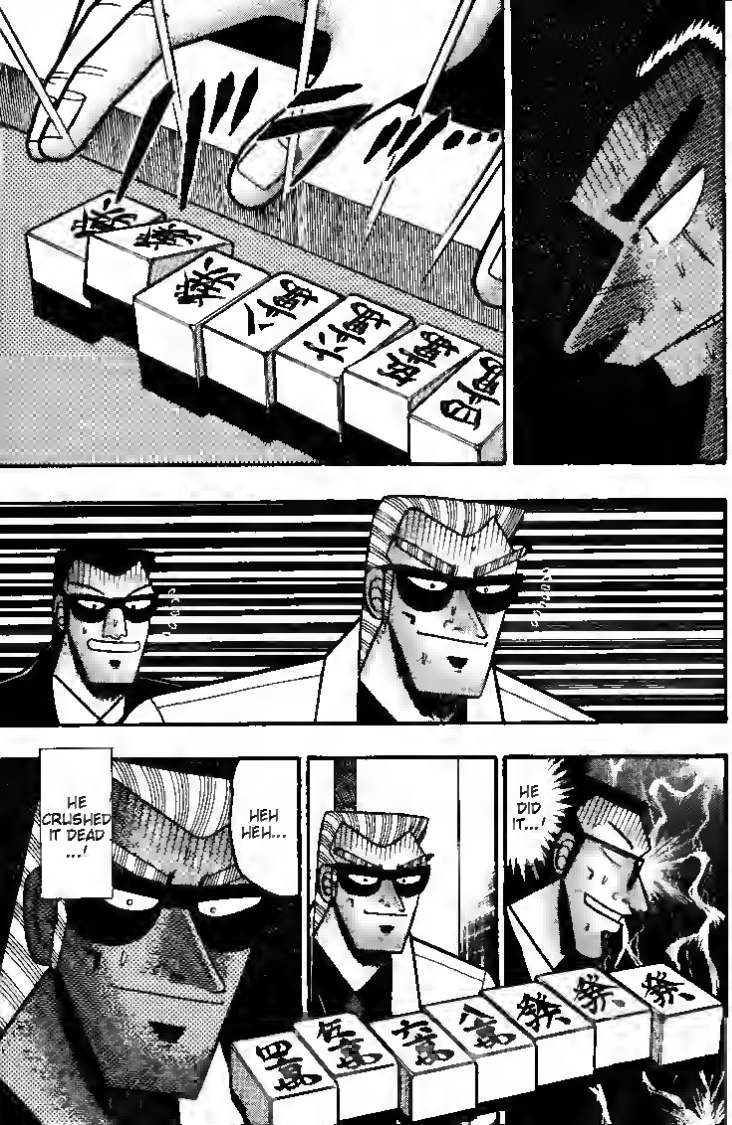

THIS ONE.....!
PERHAPS....
HIS WAIT IS UPPER MANZU

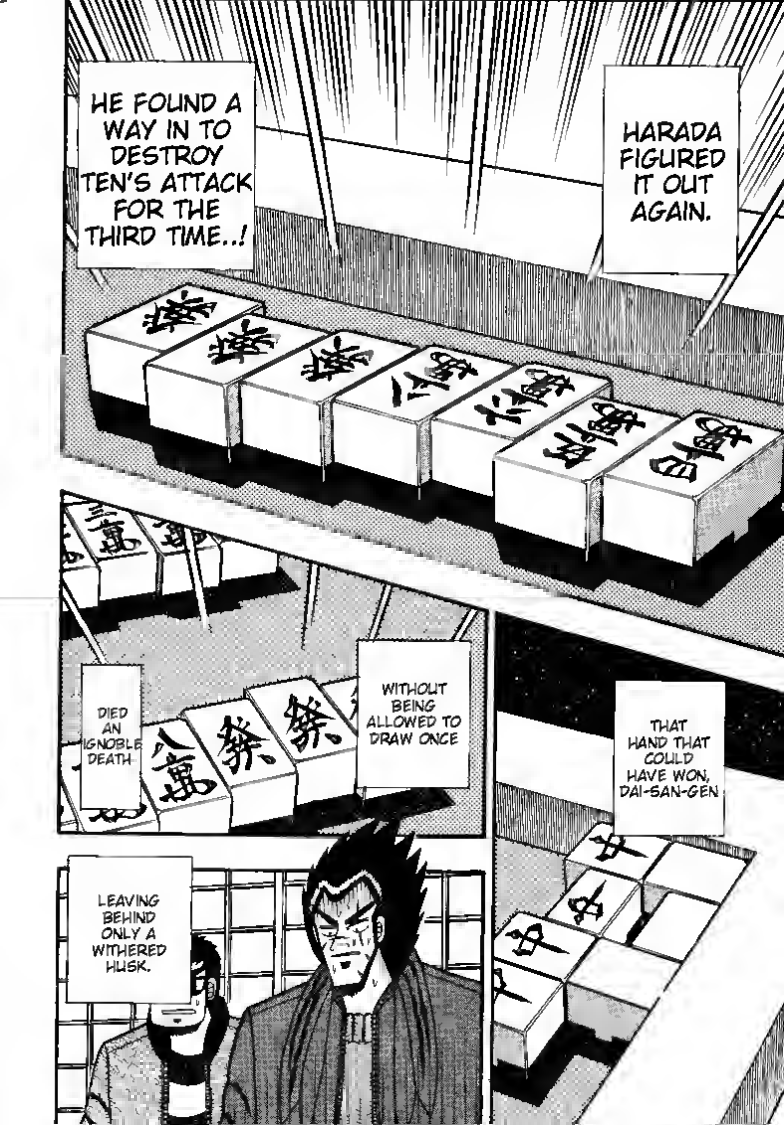
...
...
...
LIRGH
.....!
I'M DEAD CERTAIN ...!

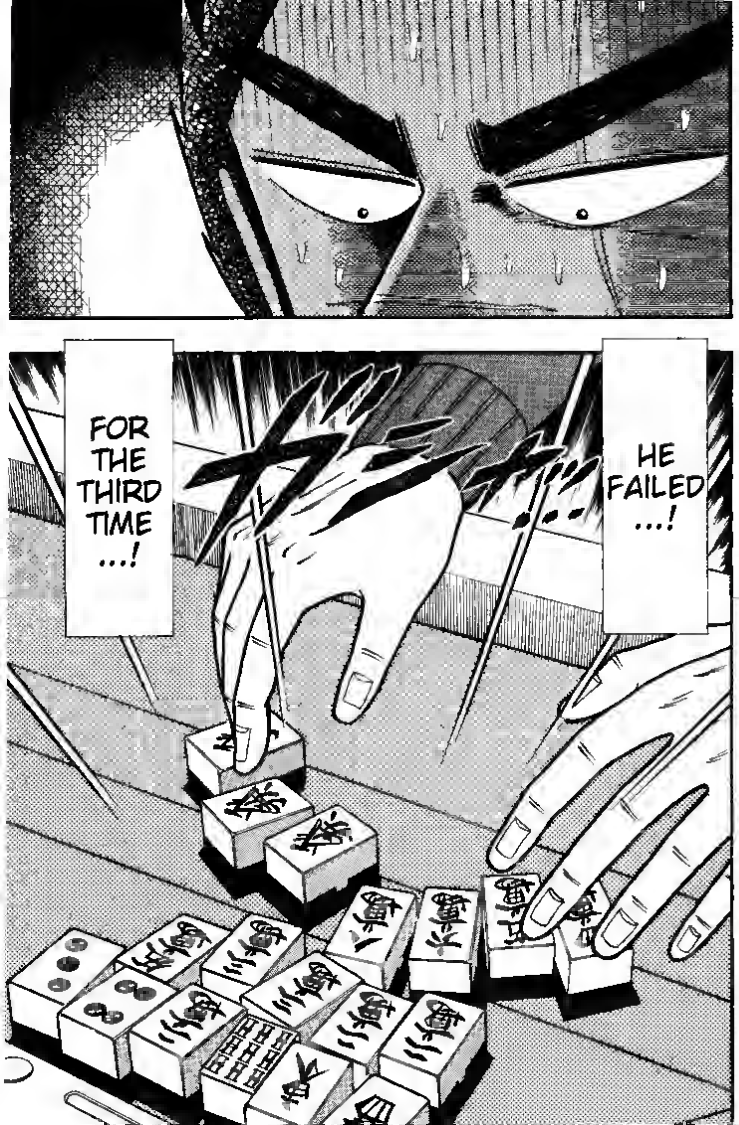

八萬

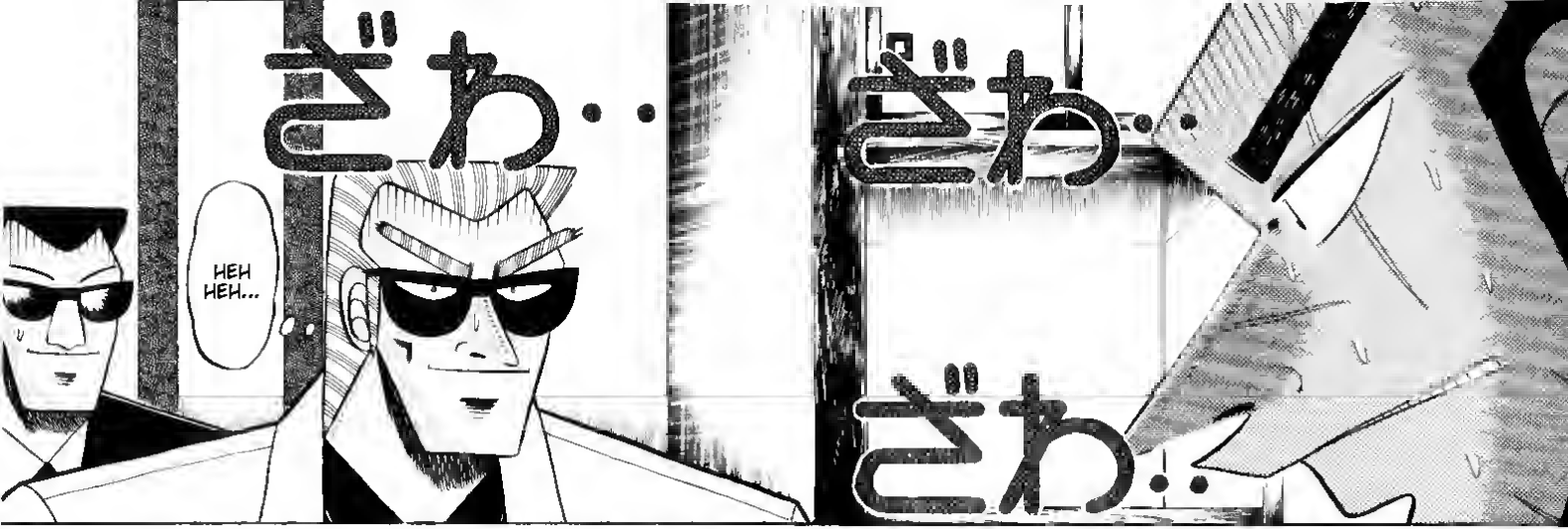
GH...!
...
...
...
WELL ...?

四萬
伍萬
六萬
八萬
發
發
發


HE CRUSHED IT DEAD ...!
HEH HEH...
HE DID IT...!

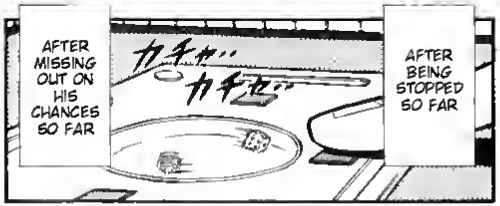

HE FOUND A WAY IN TO DESTROY TEN'S ATTACK FOR THE THIRD TIME..!
HARADA FIGURED IT OUT AGAIN.
DIED AN IGNOBLE DEATH
WITHOUT BEING ALLOWED TO DRAW ONCE
THAT HAND THAT COULD HAVE WON, DAI-SAN-GEN
LEAVING BEHIND ONLY A WITHERED HUSK.


FOR THE THIRD TIME ...!
HE FAILED ...!


ざわ..
HEH HEH...
ざわ..
ざわ..

KH ...!
STARTING HAND FOR THE 7TH MATCH.

CERTAIN DEFEAT...!
LOOKS LIKE HARADA WILL MAKE IT THERE FIRST ...
IT REALLY ...
WITH THIS HAND, IT'S GOING TO BE HARD TO GET TO TENPAI IN EVEN 18 TURNS...
AWFUL ...!
..... IT'S ALL OVER THE PLACE .....


AFTER MISSING OUT ON HIS CHANCES SO FAR
カチャ.. カチャ..
AFTER BEING STOPPED SO FAR

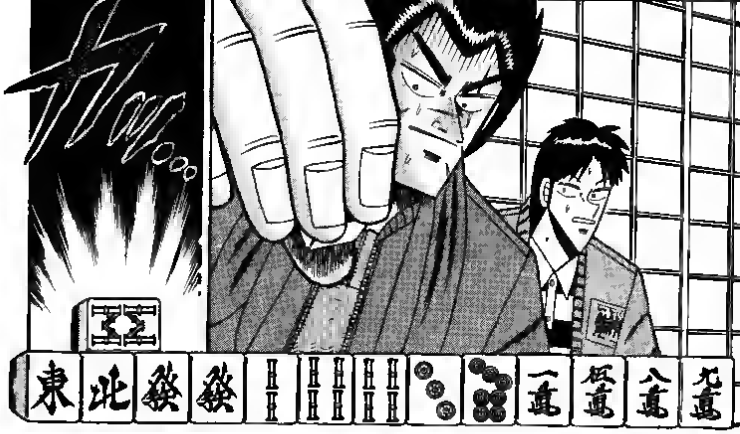
ANYONE COULD TELL THAT.
HE WOULDN'T MAKE IT NEXT ROUND.
AND NOW ...

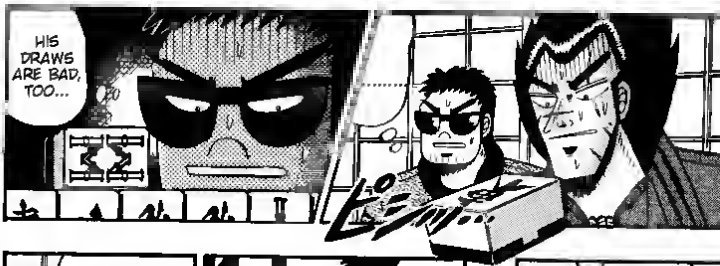
.....
THE FEELING IN THE AIR WAS CRUSHING.

A STARTING HAND THAT HAD LOST ITS FLOW FROM THE VERY BEGINNING...!
THE FLOW WAS GONE ...!
.....IT'S GOING TO BE A TOUGH FIGHT .....
FROM HERE ON .....!

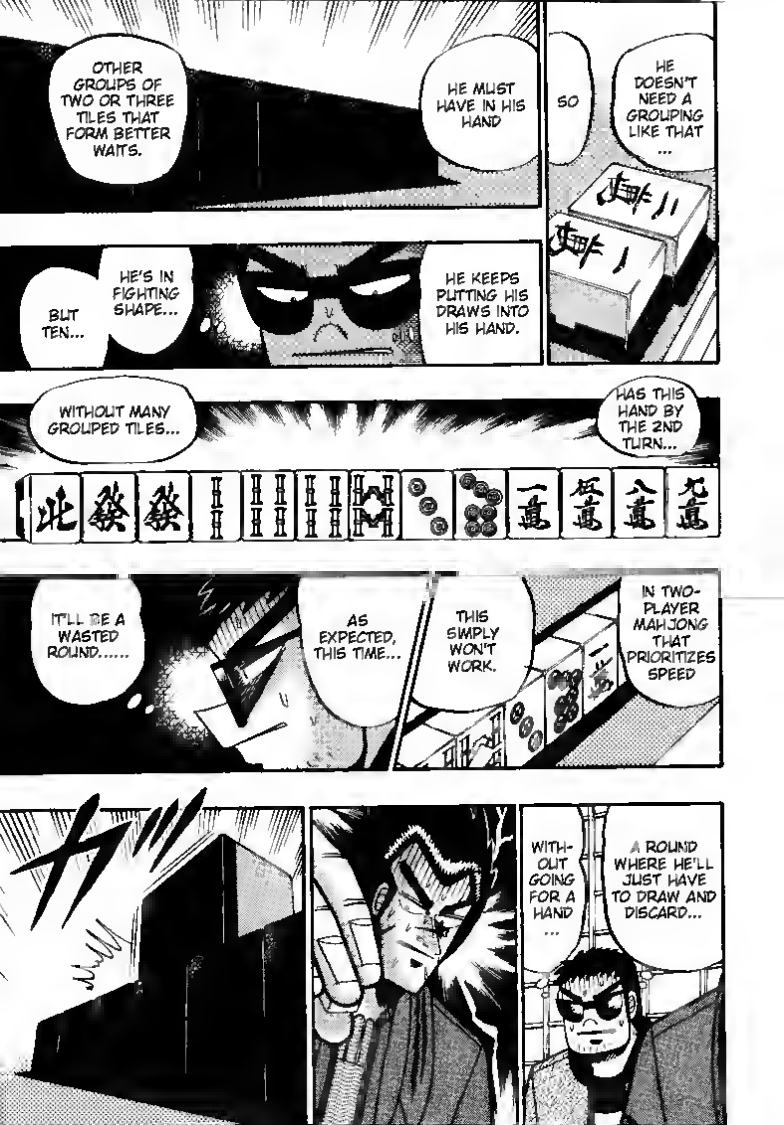
CHAPTER 113
BLUFF

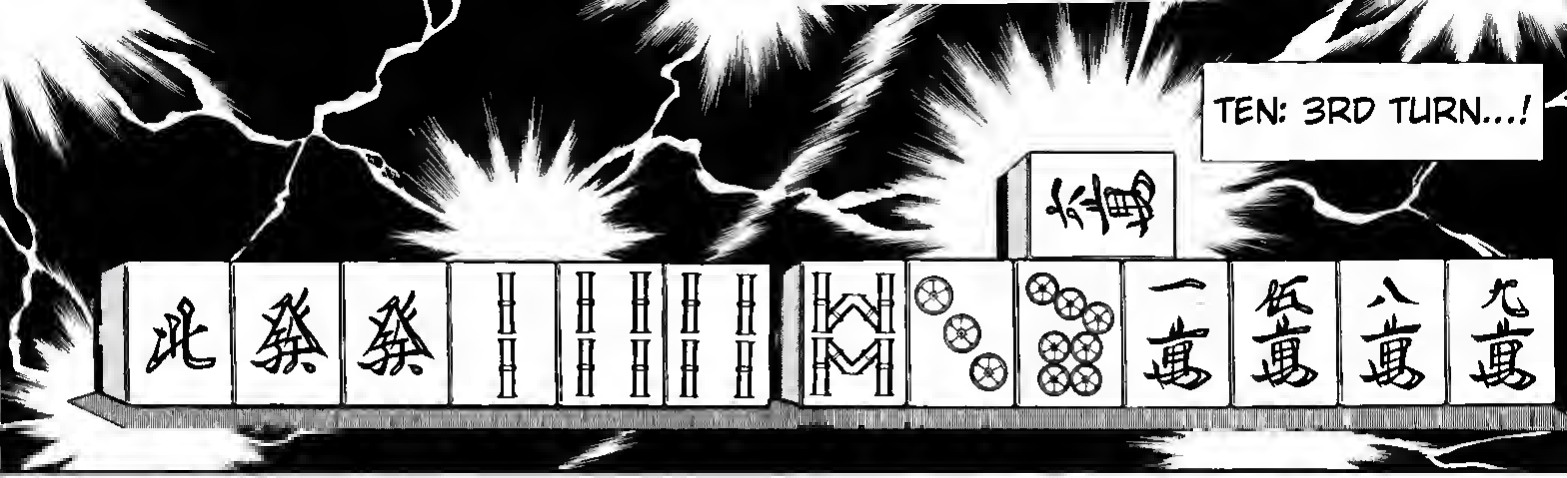
さわ…
さわ…さわ…
THE WORST…!
東 北 發 發
一萬 二萬 八萬 九萬
THIS WAS THE 7TH BATTLE.
TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG BETWEEN TEN AND HARADA.
THE CLIMACTIC CONFRONTATION OF THE EAST-WEST SHOWDOWN.
A GARBAGE HAND, A LONG WAY FROM WINNING…
IN SHAMBLES AFTER MISSING OUT ON WINNING THREE TIMES IN A ROW.
TEN'S HAND WAS

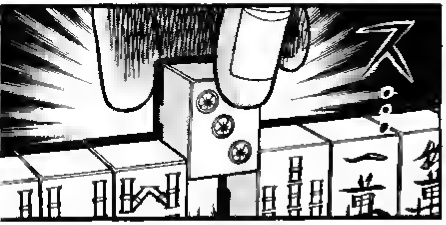



HIS DRAWS ARE BAD, TOO...

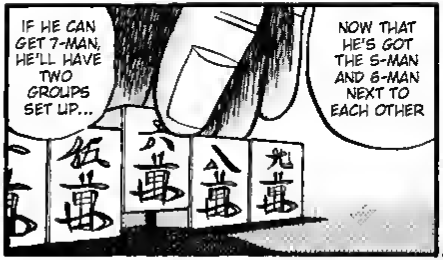
DISCARDED AN END WAIT GROUP, 1-MAN AND 2-MAN, RIGHT AT THE START.
IN OTHER WORDS...
ON THE OTHER HAND, HARADA.....
WILL HE REACH TEN-PAI OR NOT...?
THIS IS GOING TO BE A TOUGH ROUND.
ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT


OTHER GROUPS OF TWO OR THREE TILES THAT FORM BETTER WAITS.
HE MUST HAVE IN HIS HAND
SO
HE DOESN'T NEED A GROUPING LIKE THAT ...
HE'S IN FIGHTING SHAPE...
BUT TEN...
HE KEEPS PUTTING HIS DRAWS INTO HIS HAND.
WITHOUT MANY GROUPED TILES...
HAS THIS HAND BY THE 2ND TURN...
IT'LL BE A WASTED ROUND.....
AS EXPECTED, THIS TIME...
THIS SIMPLY WON'T WORK.
IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG THAT PRIORITIZES SPEED
WITH-OUT GOING FOR A HAND ...
A ROUND WHERE HE'LL JUST HAVE TO DRAW AND DISCARD...


TEN: 3RD TURN...!



HUH...!?

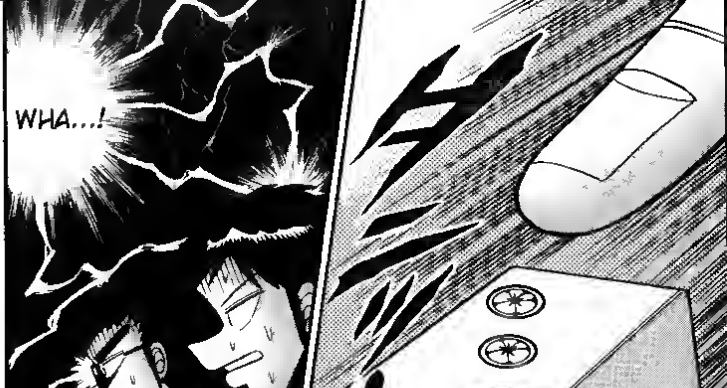

IF HE CAN GET 7-MAN, HE'LL HAVE TWO GROUPS SET UP...
NOW THAT HE'S GOT THE 5-MAN AND 6-MAN NEXT TO EACH OTHER

.....

PEI...

HERE... HE SHOULD DROP THE 1-MAN OR...
IN A STATE LIKE THIS WHERE HE DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH GROUPED TILES...

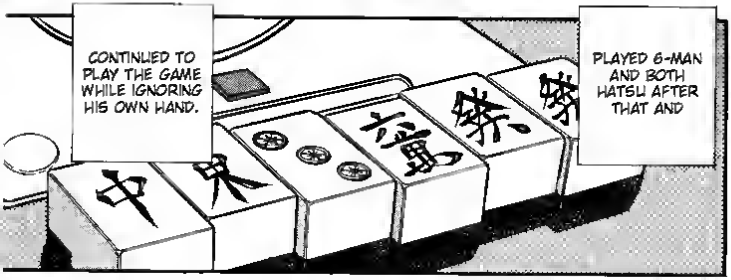
THA HE COULD JUST GET RID OF THE 8-MAN AND 9-MAN BUT...
YOU COULD SAY

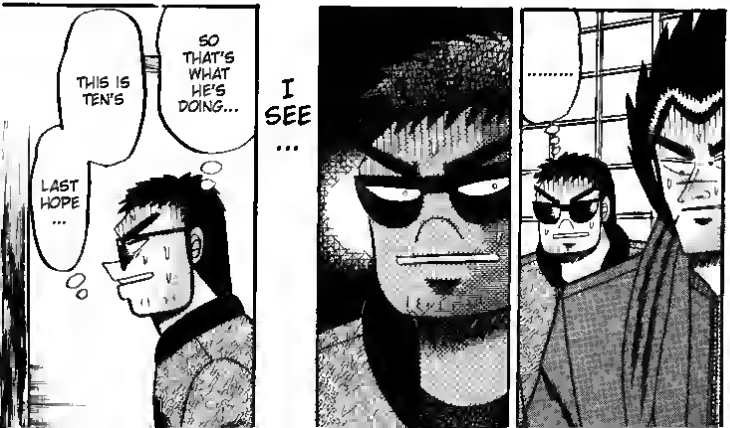

WHA...!

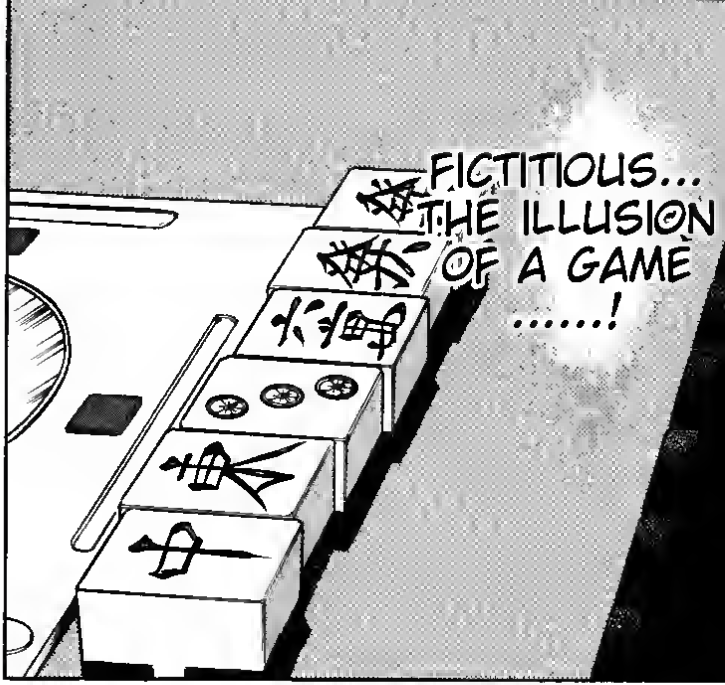
WHY ...?
WHY DISCARD 3-PIN ...?
WHY ....!?

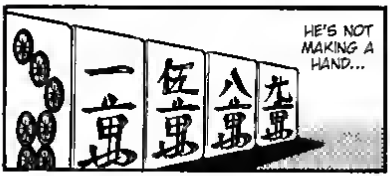
BUT...
.....
A MOVE BEYOND NORMAL MEASURES.
IT WAS STILL UNCLEAR.
WHY CUT AWAY THE CHANCE TO MAKE A NEW TILE GROUP...

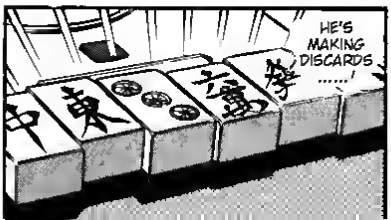
TEN...
TO KEN AND HIROYUKI.
HIS INTENTION BECAME CLEAR
AFTER A FEW TURNS


CONTINUED TO PLAY THE GAME WHILE IGNORING HIS OWN HAND.
PLAYED 6-MAN AND BOTH HATSU AFTER THAT AND


THIS IS TEN'S LAST HOPE ...
SO THAT'S WHAT HE'S DOING...
I SEE ...
.....


FICTITIOUS... THE ILLUSION OF A GAME .....!

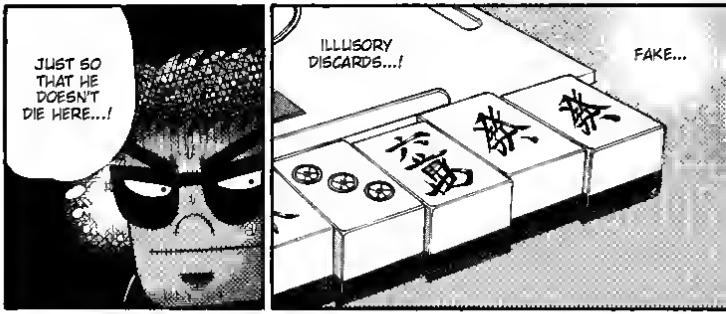

HE'S NOT MAKING A HAND...


HE'S MAKING DISCARDS .....!

HE CAN DISTRACT HIS OPPONENT...
IF A HAND WILL NEVER MATERIALIZE, AT LEAST

THE 3-PIN AND 6-MAN ARE STRONG HINTS.
BECAUSE HE DISCARDED CHUN AND TON AT THE START
THEN BY DISCARDING THE PAIR OF HATSU.....
HE CAN MAKE HIS DISCARDS MEAN SOMETHING.
EVEN WITH A CRAPPY HAND AND BAD DRAWS
AND BY DOING THIS...
WITH THESE DISCARDS ...
IT SEEMS LIKE HIS HAND IS GOING TOWARDS TAN-YAO AND PIN-FU
AND FOCUSING HIS GAME ON DETECTING HIS OPPONENTS TENPAI
IN SHORT, GIVING UP ON THE TENPAI RACE FROM THE VERY START
IN STAGE 3.
THAT'S WHAT HE'S TRYING TO LEAD HARADA INTO DOING ...!
WILL BE AN IMMEDIATE AND CHEAP RIICHI WITHOUT CAMOUFLAGE.
A RIICHI FROM HARADA
AN EASY TO DETECT RIICHI.

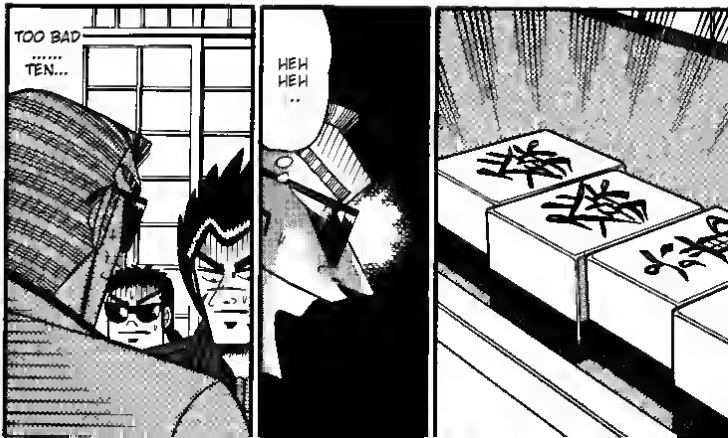
THIS IS TEN'S ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY.
HE CAN AT LEAST TRY TO CORNER HIM WITH A FICTITIOUS HAND...
IF HE CAN'T ATTACK HARADA IN REALITY

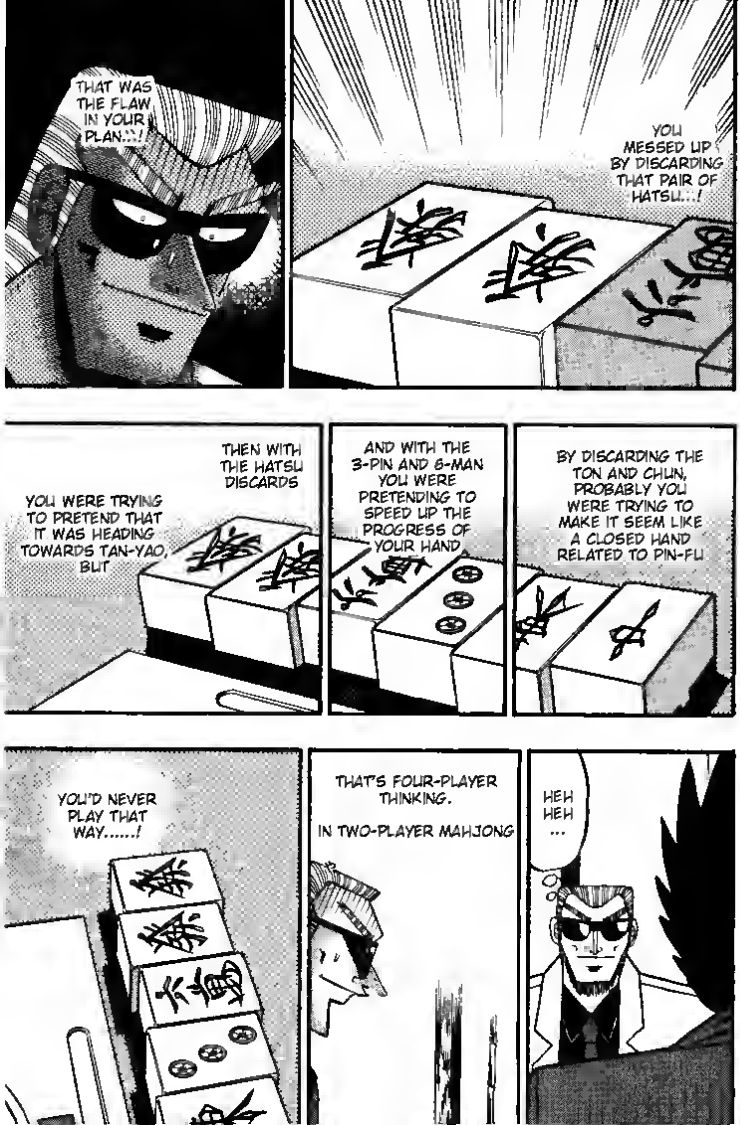

JUST SO THAT HE DOESN'T DIE HERE...!
ILLUSORY DISCARDS...!
FAKE...

ON HARADA ...?
THE QUESTION IS... WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL WORK

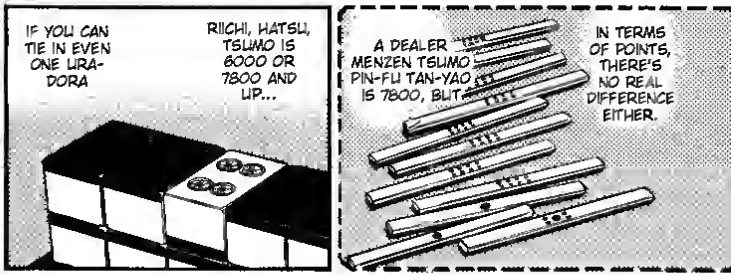
OR NOT ...?
WILL HE BE MISLED ...
HARADA ...

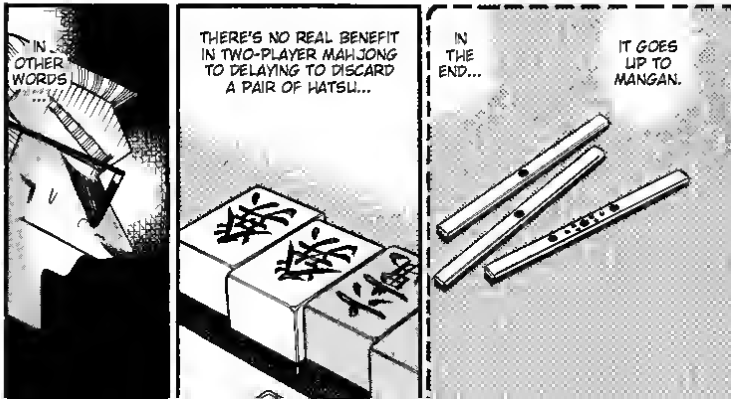
HEH
HEH
HEH
...


TOO BAD
.....
TEN...
HEH
HEH
..

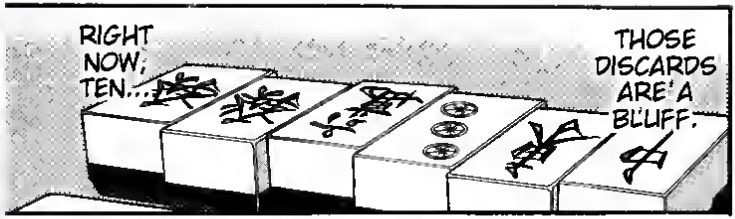

THAT WAS THE FLAW IN YOUR PLAN...!
YOU MESSED UP BY DISCARDING THAT PAIR OF HATSU...!
YOU WERE TRYING TO PRETEND THAT IT WAS HEADING TOWARDS TAN-YAO, BUT
THEN WITH THE HATSU DISCARDS
AND WITH THE 3-PIN AND 6-MAN YOU WERE PRETENDING TO SPEED UP THE PROGRESS OF YOUR HAND
BY DISCARDING THE TON AND CHUN, PROBABLY YOU WERE TRYING TO MAKE IT SEEM LIKE A CLOSED HAND RELATED TO PIN-FU
YOU'D NEVER PLAY THAT WAY.....!
THAT'S FOUR-PLAYER THINKING.
IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG
HEH HEH ...

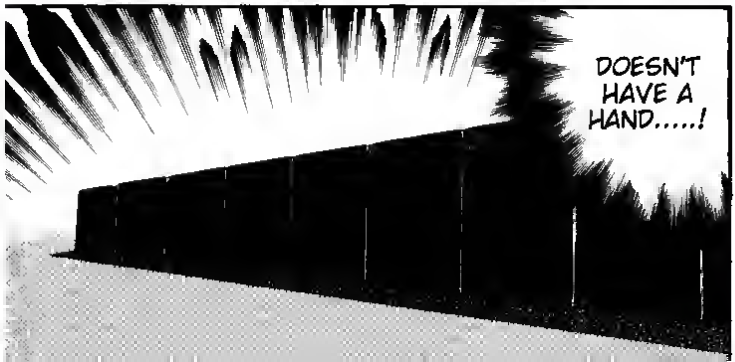
THAN AN EASY TO PREDICT CLOSED TAN-YAO PIN-FU.
IS A MUCH BETTER PLAN
KEEPING IT FOR A DOUBLE-PAIR WAIT ON HATSU AND SOMETHING ELSE
IF YOU HAVE A PAIR OF HATSU

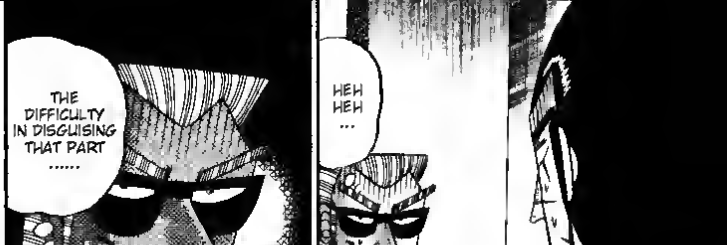

IF YOU CAN TIE IN EVEN ONE URA-DORA
RIICHI, HATSU, TSUMO IS 8000 OR 7800 AND UP...
A DEALER MENZEN TSUMO PIN-FU TAN-YAO IS 7800, BUT...
IN TERMS OF POINTS, THERE'S NO REAL DIFFERENCE EITHER.


IN OTHER WORDS...
THERE'S NO REAL BENEFIT IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG TO DELAYING TO DISCARD A PAIR OF HATSU...
IN THE END...
IT GOES UP TO MANGAN.

HE'S BLUFFING ...!


RIGHT NOW, TEN...
THOSE DISCARDS ARE A BLUFF.


DOESN'T HAVE A HAND.....!


THE DIFFICULTY IN DISGUISING THAT PART .....
HEH HEH ...

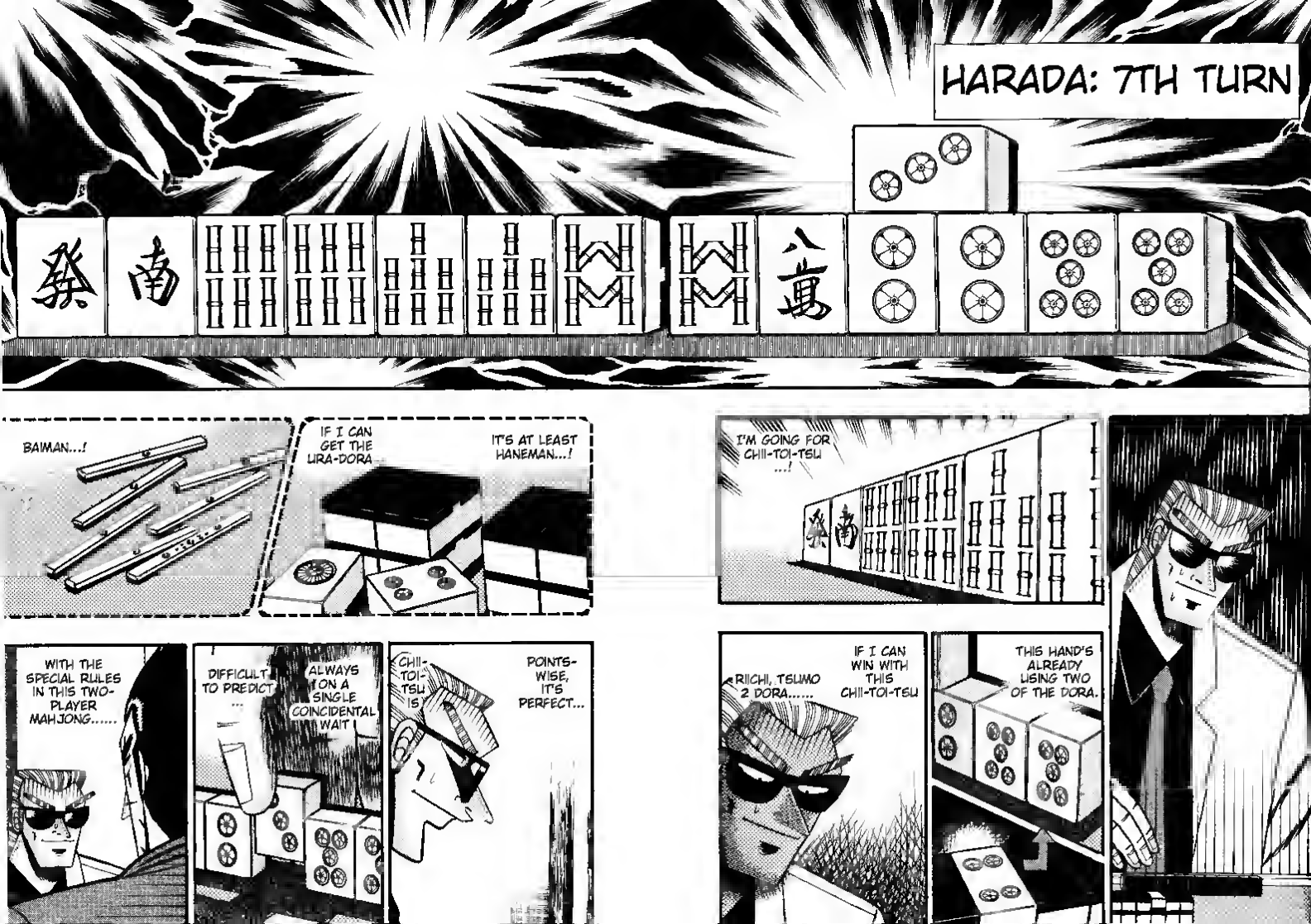
IN THE END
TRYING AND TRYING TO SEND THAT MESSAGE.....
BY JUST...
IS THAT IT DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT WHEN IT'S DONE SO CASUALLY.

NOW... IT'S NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE'D HAVE A GOOD HAND.
GENARLLY SPEAKING... AFTER TEN MISSED WINNING THREE TIMES IN A ROW

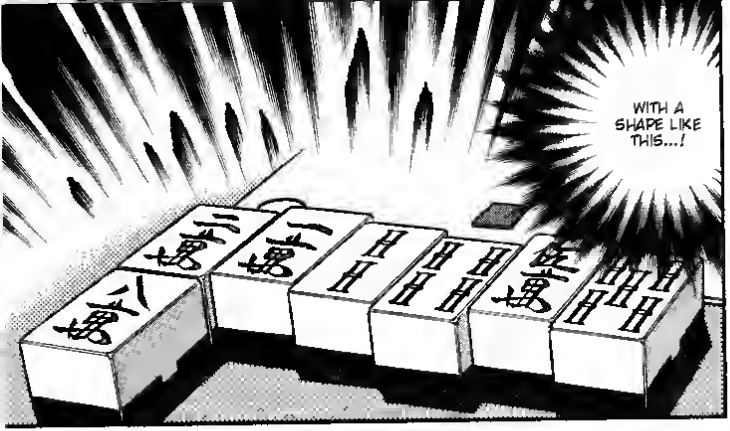
DIGGING HIS OWN GRAVE .../
OVERDOING IT HAS THE OPPOSITE EFFECT...

INTO THINKING HE HAS A GOOD HAND.../
AS IF HE'D FOOL ME
IT'S SUSPICIOUS FROM THE START

AS IF I'D BE FOOLED BY A BLUFF LIKE THAT ...!
SINCE I KNOW THAT'S WHAT HE'S DOING
I CAN TAKE MY TIME..
TO MAKE MY HAND
CAREFULLY.. MOVING SLOWLY...


HARADA: 7TH TURN
發
南
八萬
BAIMAN...!
IF I CAN GET THE URA-DORA
IT'S AT LEAST HANEMAN...!
I'M GOING FOR CHII-TOI-TSU ...!
WITH THE SPECIAL RULES IN THIS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG.....
DIFFICULT TO PREDICT ...
ALWAYS ON A SINGLE COINCIDENTAL WAIT
CHII-TOI-TSU IS
POINTS-WISE, IT'S PERFECT...
RIICHI, TSUMO 2 DORA.....
IF I CAN WIN WITH THIS CHII-TOI-TSU
THIS HAND'S ALREADY USING TWO OF THE DORA.

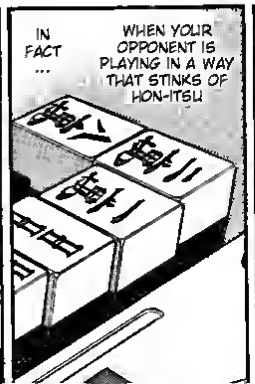
A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF USEFULNESS IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG ...!
THIS CHII-TOI-TSU HAS...
WHEN CONSIDERING THE ENEMY'S PREDICTIONS IN STAGE B
IT'S IDEAL..!
AND IT HAS TWO DORA..!
ドン!!
FOR INSTANCE .....
IT'S EASY TO LAY A TRAP IN THE DISCARDS ...!
WITH THIS CHII-TOI-TSU
.....


WITH A SHAPE LIKE THIS...!

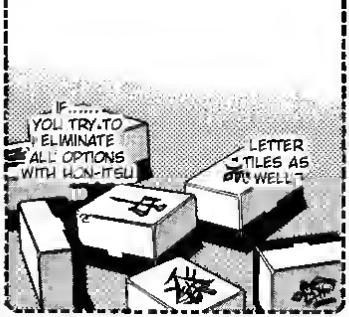
IT'S AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY.
ONE OF THE BASICS OF TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG IS TO DISGUISE YOUR HAND AS HON-ITSU....!

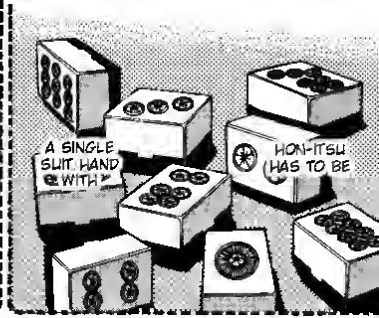
DISCARDS THAT STINK OF HON-ITSU ...!

IT'S HARD TO HANDLE PICKING OUT THEIR WAIT...!

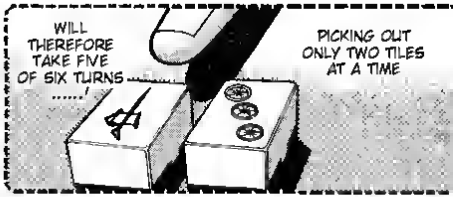

IN FACT ...
WHEN YOUR OPPONENT IS PLAYING IN A WAY THAT STINKS OF HON-ITSU

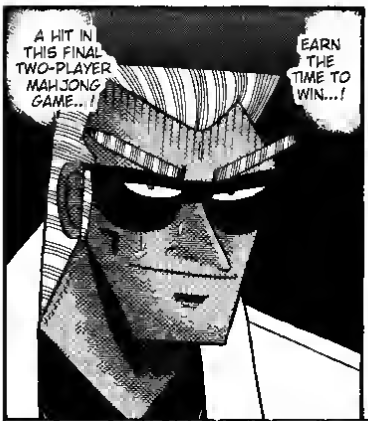
THAT'S SOMETHING THE OPPOSING SIDE KNOWS .....


...IF.....
YOU TRY TO
ELIMINATE
ALL OPTIONS
WITH HON-ITSU
LETTER
TILES AS
WELL...


A SINGLE
SUIT HAND
WITH
HON-ITSU
HAS TO BE

THAT'S WHAT
IT WILL TAKE,
IF YOU'RE
TRYING TO
COMPLETELY
ELIMINATE IT
.....


WILL
THEREFORE
TAKE FIVE
OF SIX TURNS
.....!
PICKING OUT
ONLY TWO TILES
AT A TIME

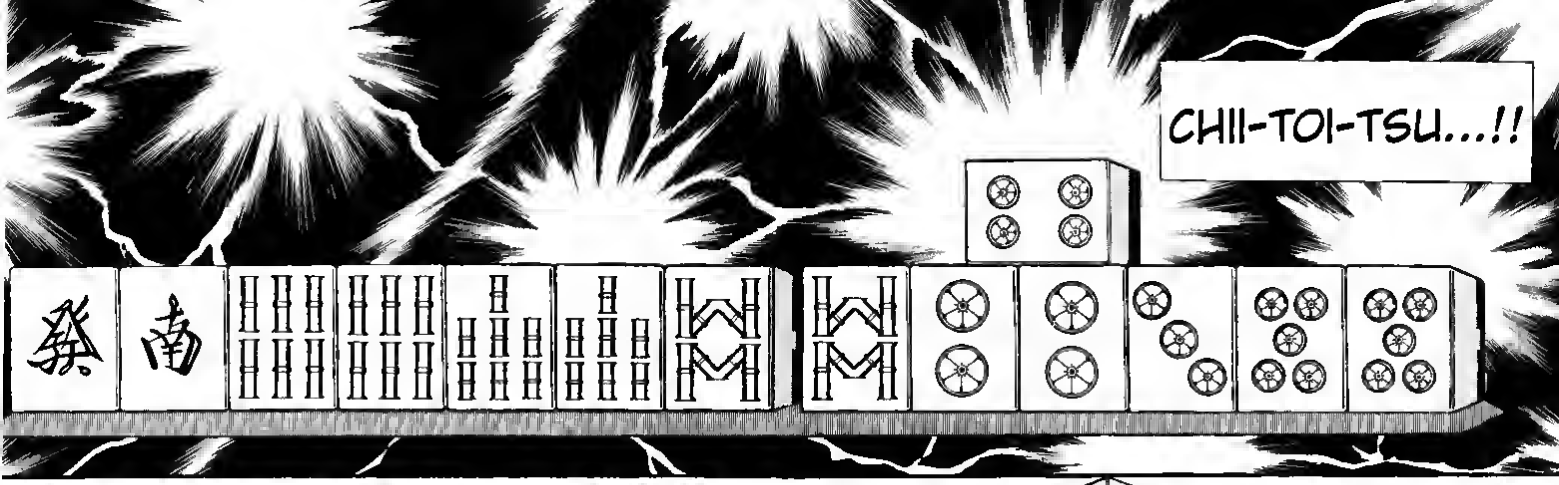

A HIT IN
THIS FINAL
TWO-PLAYER
MAHJONG
GAME..!
EARN
THE
TIME TO
WIN...!

IT'S AN
EFFECTIVE
WAY TO
EARN
SOME
TIME
!

第113話[ブラフ]●完

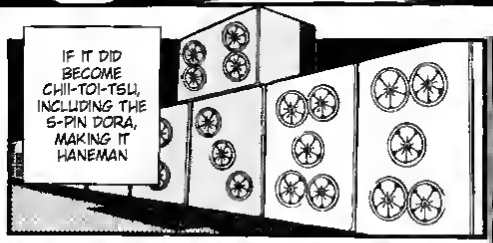
CHAPTER 114
DEEP FOG

ざわ..
ざわ..
ざわ.
THE 7TH BATTLE OF TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG.
TEN'S HAND WAS IN NO SHAPE TO ATTACK WITH.
A POOR HAND.
IN THE RACE TO REACH TENPAI
HE WOULDN'T BEAT HARADA.
SO WHAT TEN DECIDED WAS
ピン!!
HARADA PICKED UP ON THAT
AND INSTEAD CALMLY PUT TOGETHER HIS HAND.
HIS GOAL WAS
THE MOST EFFECTIVE YAKU FOR TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG .....
TO QUICKLY GIVE UP ON MAKING A HAND
AND PRETEND TO HAVE A GOOD ONE THROUGH HIS DISCARDS
LURING HARADA INTO MAKING A LOW-VALUE RICHI
BUT...


CHII-TOI-TSU...!!

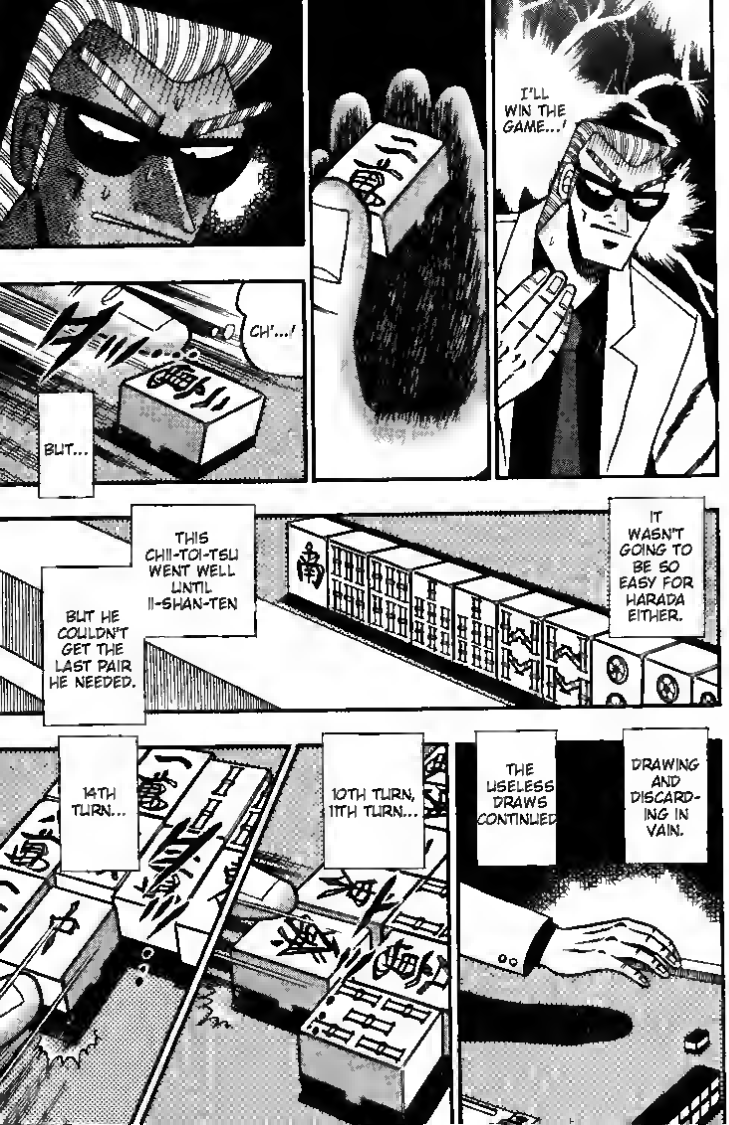
MAKING IT EASY TO PREDICT ...
INEVITABLY HIS HAND WOULD BE TIED TO SOME YAKU
HE WOULD NEED SANBAIMAN ...OR A SIMILAR HAND.
FOR TEN TO OVERCOME THAT HUGE POINT DIFFERENCE

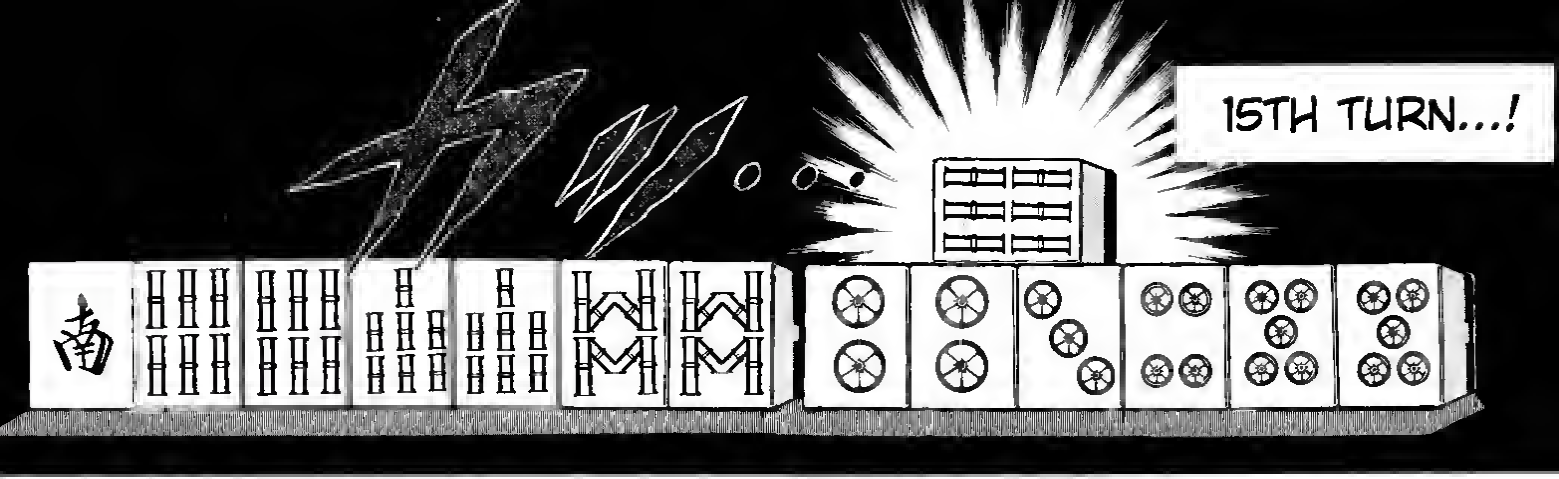
KILLING HIM BEFORE HE MADE A SINGLE DRAW...!
HARADA WOULD KEEP DETECTING HIS WAIT
DURING THE NEXT PART, STAGE B
WHEN HE GOT INTO TENPAI
IN SHORT


IF IT DID BECOME CHII-TOI-TSU, INCLUDING THE 5-PIN DORA, MAKING IT HANEMAN

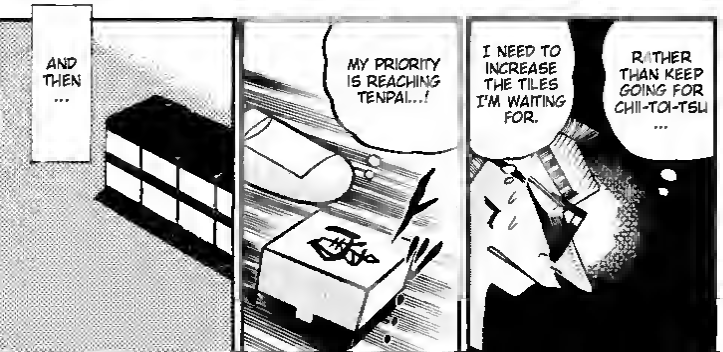
EITHER WAY, A COMEBACK OVER THE PRESENT DIFFERENCE OF 300 POINTS
AND IF HE GOT THE URA-DORA, IT WOULD BE BAIMAN FOR 18900.
WITH THE THREE DEALER STICKS AND TWO RIICHI STICKS INCLUDED, HE WOULD GET 14900.
HARADA WOULD OVERTAKE TEN...!
CHANGING THE POINT DIFFERENCE TO 18600 OR 14600 IN HIS FAVOR

THE RULES WERE SUCH THAT THERE WAS NO DEALING IN...
MAKING A HUGE DIFFER-ENCE ...!
THAT SORT OF PATTERN WOULD CONTINUE.
IF ONE SIDE COULD GET THAT MUCH AHEAD
IT WOULD BE ONE HUGE STEP CLOSER TO VICTORY.
OVER DOUBLE THE VALUE IT HAD IN FOUR-PLAYER.
A DIFFERENCE OF OVER 10000 POINTS WAS BASICALLY...
IN THIS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG
IF THE WAIT WAS DETECTED IN STAGE B, THAT HAND WAS FINISHED... WHICH MEANS
IF I CAN WIN WITH THIS CHII-TOI-TSU...
THIS CHII-TOI-TSU ...
ADVANCE —!

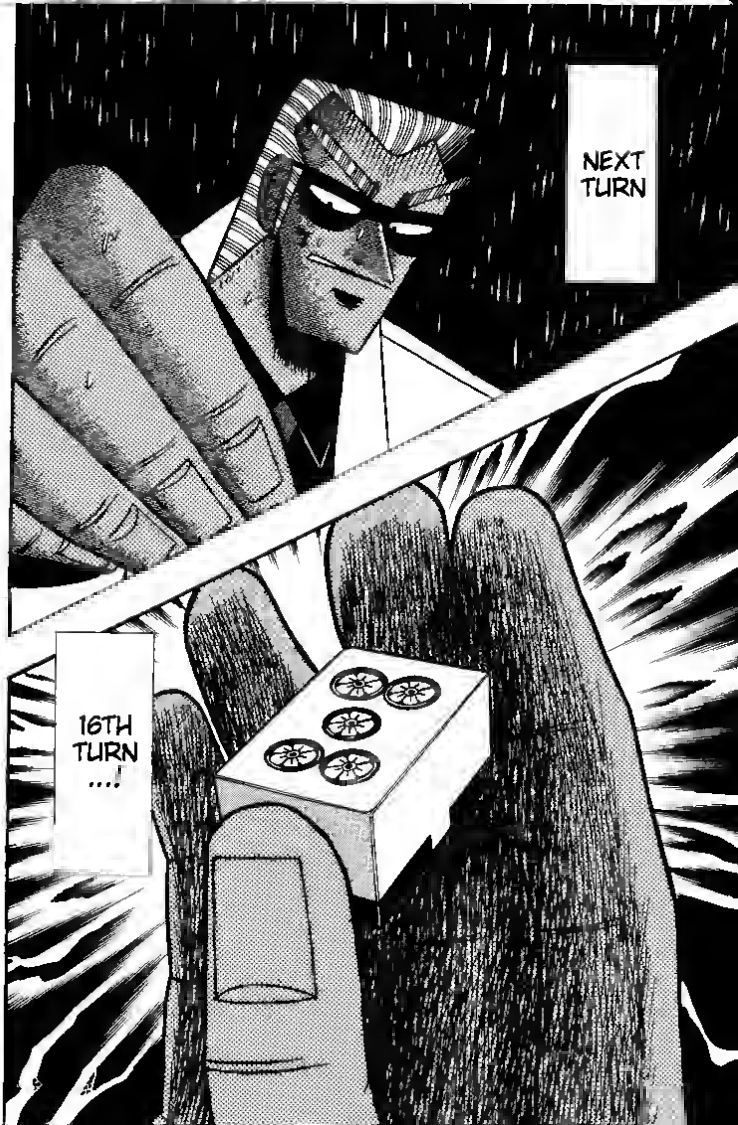

I'LL WIN THE GAME...!
CH'...!
BUT...
IT WASN'T GOING TO BE SO EASY FOR HARADA EITHER.
THIS CHII-TOI-TSU WENT WELL UNTIL II-SHAN-TEN
BUT HE COULDN'T GET THE LAST PAIR HE NEEDED.
DRAWING AND DISCARD-ING IN VAIN.
THE USELESS DRAWS CONTINUED
10TH TURN, 11TH TURN...
14TH TURN...


15TH TURN...!

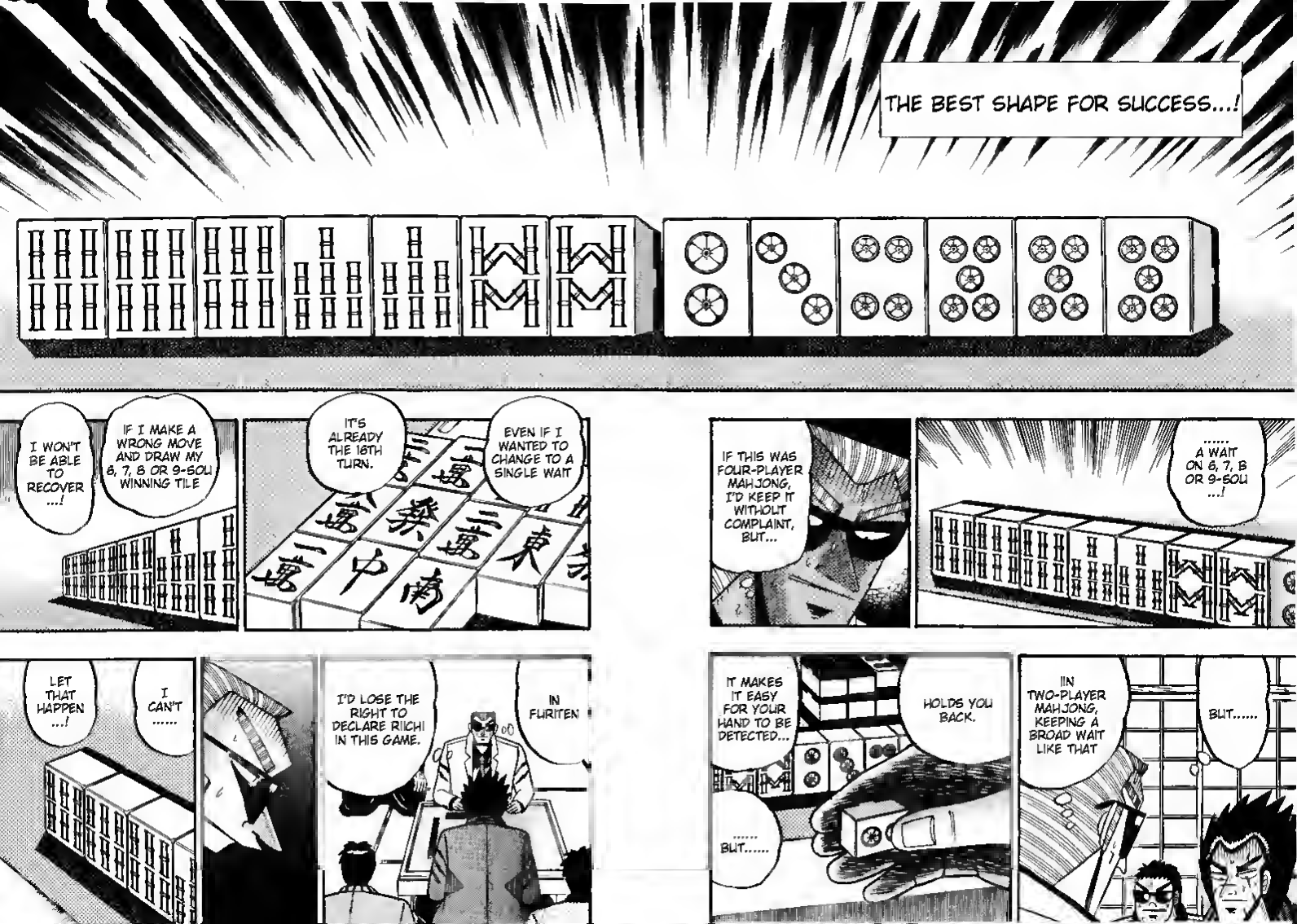
IF I MOVE SLOWLY, I WON'T EVEN REACH TENPAI.
THERE'S ONLY THREE TURNS LEFT NOW...
RIGHT NOW...
I'M A HALF-STEP FURTHER FROM CHII-TOI-TSU BUT...
IF I KEEP THIS 6-SOU

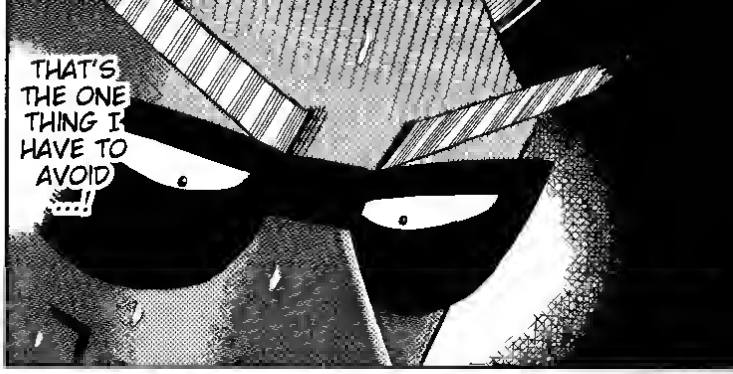

AND THEN ...
MY PRIORITY IS REACHING TENPAI...!
I NEED TO INCREASE THE TILES I'M WAITING FOR.
RATHER THAN KEEP GOING FOR CHII-TOI-TSU ...

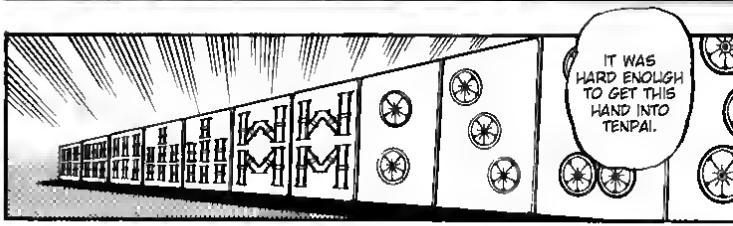
A HAND THAT COULD ADVANCE LIKE A NORMAL HAND.
GIVING HIM A DIFFERENT HAND FROM HIS GOAL, CHII-TOI-TSU.
... ...
HE DREW 6-SOU .....!

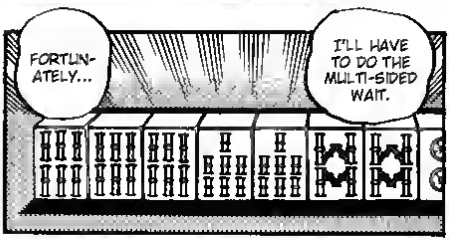

NEXT TURN
16TH TURN ...!

THE DORA, 5-PIN...!
ざわ・・・
IN THE END
HARADA'S HAND
TOOK A DIFFERENT SHAPE THAN THE CHII-TOI-TSU THAT HE HAD BEEN AFTER
WITHOUT II-PEI-KOU, MANGAN, AND WITH II-PEI-KOU, HANEMAN.
OR IF HE DREW 7-SOU OR 8-SOU, SAN-AN-KOU... FOR BAIMAN...
LOOKING AT IT AS A USUAL HAND...


THE BEST SHAPE FOR SUCCESS...!
I WON'T BE ABLE TO RECOVER ...!
IF I MAKE A WRONG MOVE AND DRAW MY 6, 7, 8 OR 9-SOU WINNING TILE
IT'S ALREADY THE 16TH TURN.
EVEN IF I WANTED TO CHANGE TO A SINGLE WAIT
IF THIS WAS FOUR-PLAYER MAHJONG, I'D KEEP IT WITHOLT COMPLAINT, BUT...
..... A WAIT ON 6, 7, 8 OR 9-SOU ...!
LET THAT HAPPEN ...!
I CAN'T .....
I'D LOSE THE RIGHT TO DECLARE RIICHI IN THIS GAME.
IN FURITEN
IT MAKES IT EASY FOR YOUR HAND TO BE DETECTED...
HOLDS YOU BACK.
..... BUT.....
IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG, KEEPING A BROAD WAIT LIKE THAT
BUT.....


THAT'S THE ONE THING I HAVE TO AVOID...!


IT WAS HARD ENOUGH TO GET THIS HAND INTO TENPAI.


FORTUN-ATELY...
I'LL HAVE TO DO THE MULTI-SIDED WAIT.

IF THIS IS WHAT IT'S COME TO
I CAN'T HOLD OUT FOR A SINGLE WAIT ANY MORE.

THE DISCARD CAMOUFLAGE LOOKS GOOD.

I BET TEN WILL MISREAD THEM AT LEAST ONCE .....!
I'LL HAVE ONE CHANCE TO DRAW (FIVE TIMES).
IN SHORT .....
THOSE FIRST TWO TILES HE PICKS WILL BE WRONG...!
GO FOR IT...!
THEN ...

RIICHI ...!
GH ...!

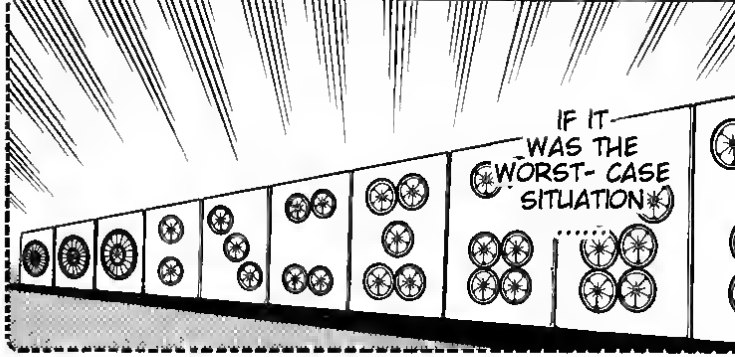
ざわ…
ざわ…
ざわ…

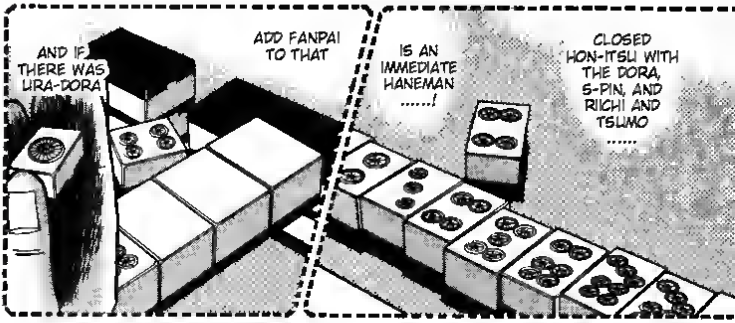
.....
AT THOSE DISCARDS OF HARADA'S...
LOOKING...

TO START... 5-PIN, THE DORA...!
TEN'S FIRST PICK WAS
.....
WRONG ...!
.....
CONTINUING ON, HIS SECOND TILE WAS
.....

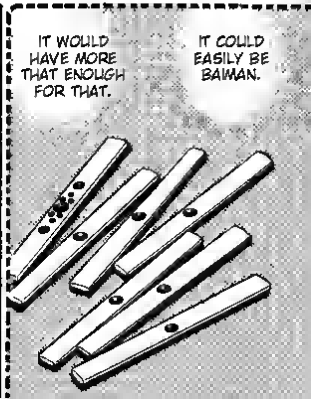
HAKU ...!
HEH HEH HEH ..
GH...!
WRONG...!
SO THAT'S THE WAY HE'S LEANING ...

THESE DISCARDS ARE OVER-EXAGGERATED.
A MAN LIKE TEN WOULD BARELY SENSE IT.
OF COURSE
BUT.....
PRETENDING IT'S A HON-ITSU HAND...!
THEY COULD BE FAKED DISCARDS...
THAT WAS WHAT HE SAW.....
HE WAS FAIRLY CONFIDENT ...
SEEING IT AS HON-ITSU, CONNECTED TO THE DORA
HE HAD COURAGE ...!

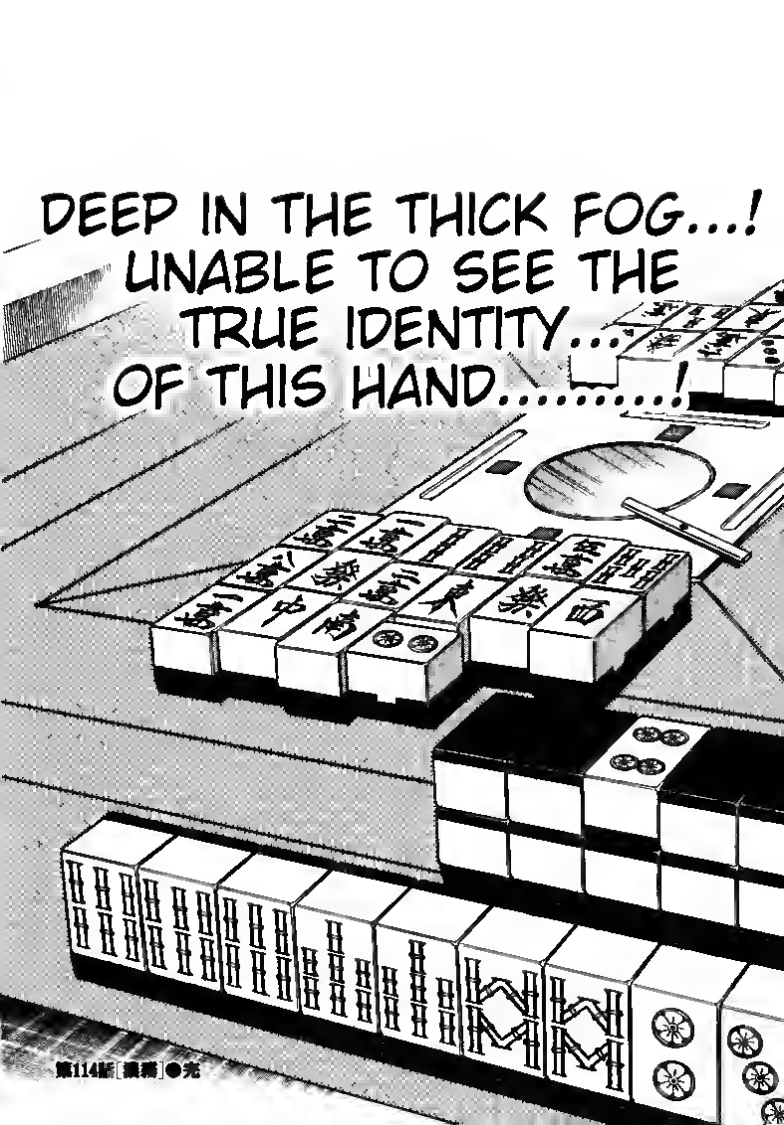

IF IT WAS THE WORST- CASE SITUATION


AND IF THERE WAS URA-DORA
ADD FANPAI TO THAT
IS AN IMMEDIATE HANEMAN ……!
CLOSED HON-ITSU WITH THE DORA, 5-PIN, AND RICHI AND TSUMO ……

EVEN WHILE FEELING IT'S FAKED...
WHICH... WOULD MEAN


IT WOULD HAVE MORE THAT ENOUGH FOR THAT.
IT COULD EASILY BE BAIMAN.

HE HAD TO DEAL WITH THAT AREA.....!
IT WAS A WISE DECISION FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW
BUT ...
THAT WISDOM IS THE CANCER THAT WILL KILL HIM.
THAT WAY OF THINKING, THE IDEA ITSELF
DOESN'T HAVE THE SPARK OF INSIGHT.
RIGHT NOW... HE'S LOST..... CONFUSED.....


DEEP IN THE THICK FOG...!
UNABLE TO SEE THE
TRUE IDENTITY...
OF THIS HAND.....!
第114話［混沌］●完

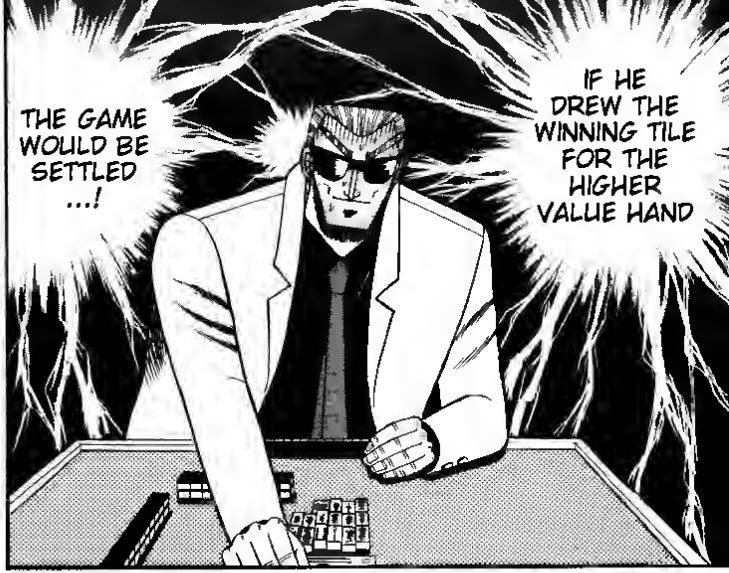
天
CHAPTER 115
THE GREAT DIVIDE

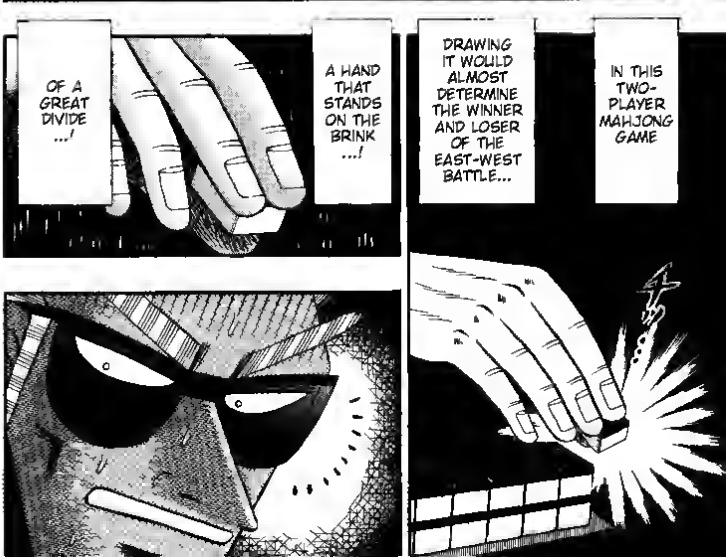
ざわ…
HEH HEH HEH ……
ざわ…
ざわ…
THAT THE YAKU HARADA WAS AFTER WAS CHII-TOI-TSU, TOO.
TEN HAD ALSO FELT ALL ALONG
AT THIS POINT IN TIME, TEN
THE HINT OF A HON-ITSU HAND LED HIM INTO MAKING A MISTAKE, BUT
HE WENT AFTER BOTH HON-ITSU AND CHII-TOI-TSU
SEEING THAT
PULLING OUT THE TILES...
CHII-TOI-TSU ... A HAND MADE UP ON PAIRS ...!
IN OTHER WORDS, HE HAD PREDICTED HALF OF HARADA'S HAND.
THE FIRST SELECTION TEN MADE WAS……
HARADA DECLARED RIICHI AND
THE 7TH BATTLE OF THE TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG MATCH.
JUST AS HARADA HAD IMAGINED.
WRONG ...!

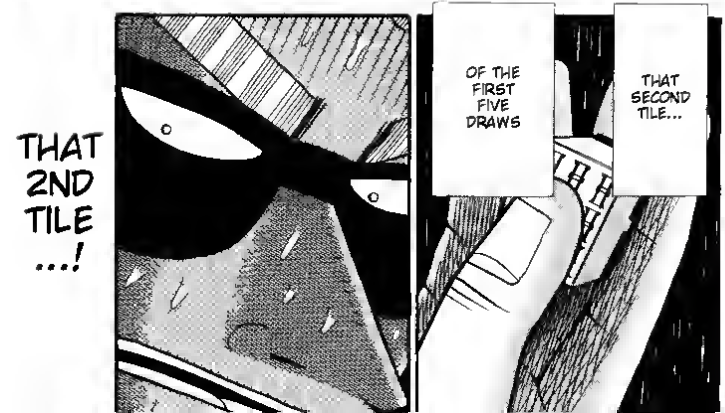
HAKU AND THE DORA, 5-PIN .....!
.....
Ooo
HE EDGED CLOSER ...

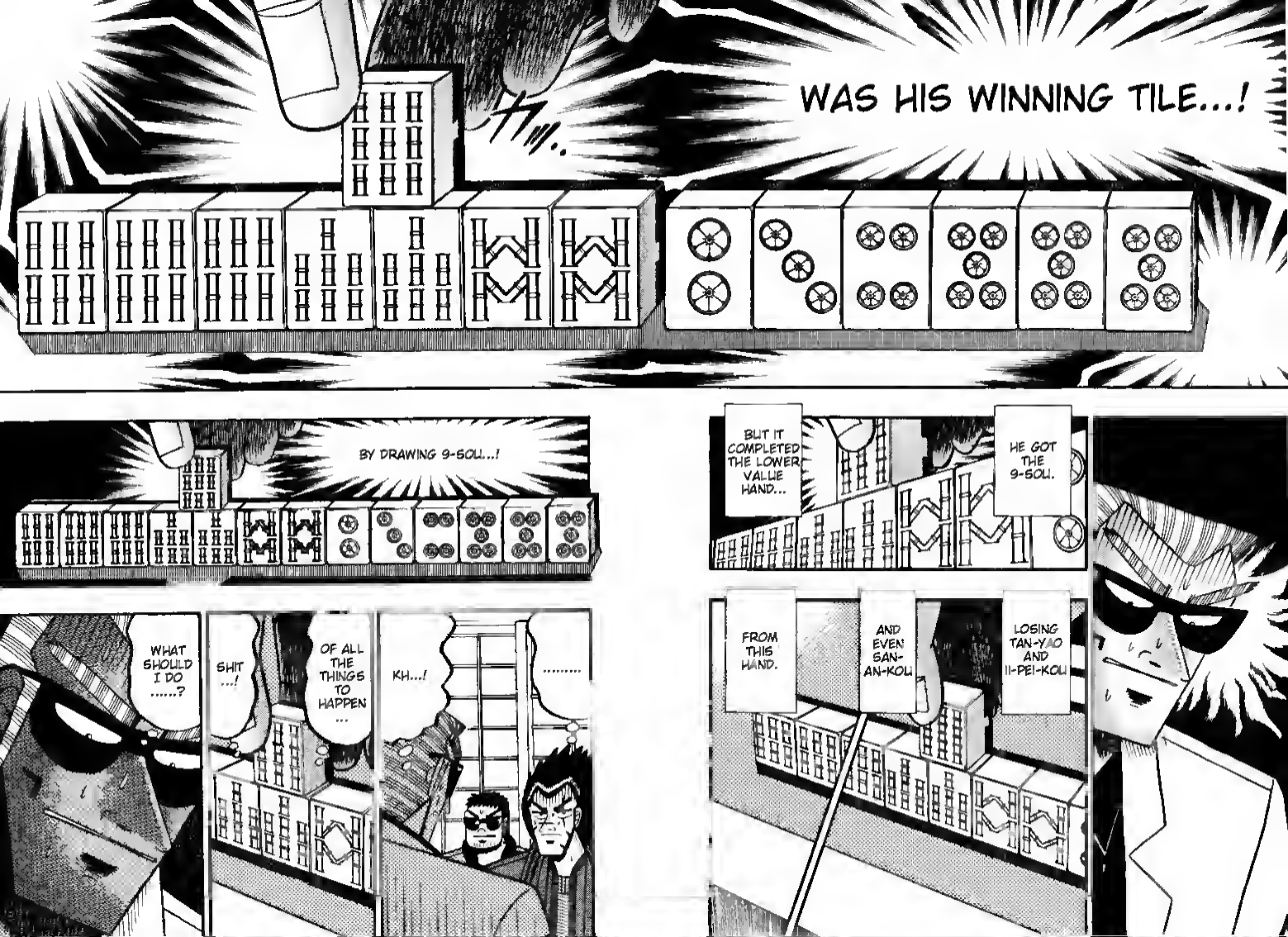
AS WAS HIS RIGHT .....!
HARADA DREW FIVE TIMES...
SO THERE-FORE...
BUT... A WRONG GUESS IS STILL WRONG.

WAITING ON 6-SOU, 7-SOU, 8-SOU, 9-SOU .....!
ANY OF THEM WOULD GIVE HIM MANGAN OR MORE.....!
6-SOU WOULD GIVE HANEMAN.
7-SOU OR 8-SOU WOULD GIVE BAIMAN..
A HUGE HAND ...!


IF HE DREW THE WINNING TILE FOR THE HIGHER VALUE HAND
THE GAME WOULD BE SETTLED ...!


IN THIS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG GAME
DRAWING IT WOULD ALMOST DETERMINE THE WINNER AND LOSER OF THE EAST-WEST BATTLE...
A HAND THAT STANDS ON THE BRINK ...!
OF A GREAT DIVIDE ...!


THAT 2ND TILE ...!
THAT SECOND TILE...
OF THE FIRST FIVE DRAWS


WAS HIS WINNING TILE...!
BY DRAWING 9-SOU...!
WHAT SHOULD I DO .....?
SHIT ...!
OF ALL THE THINGS TO HAPPEN ...
KH...!
.....
BUT IT COMPLETED THE LOWER VALUE HAND...
HE GOT THE 9-SOU.
FROM THIS HAND.
AND EVEN SAN-AN-KOU
LOSING TAN-YAO AND II-PEI-KOU

IT WAS SINK OR SWIM...
HE TOOK A RISK.
.....
AT THIS POINT, FOR HARADA
?

IN ORDER TO SETTLE THIS GAME OF TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG IN ONE BLOW
A GAMBLE.....!
IT'S MY WINNING TILE...
BUT... I'M NOT GOING TO WIN FROM IT...!
I'LL KEEP GOING ...!

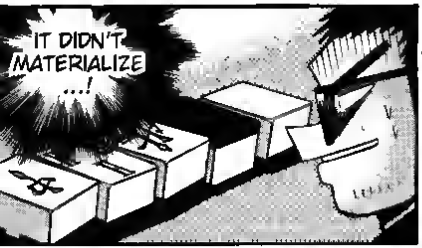
.....
I'LL KEEP DRAWING ...!
THIS GUY...
AND HE'D QUESTIONED IF HE'D GET THERE OR NOT...
EVEN WHEN HE NEEDS TO TAKE THE LEAD, NO MATTER WHAT...
UP UNTIL THE VERY FINAL MOMENT
SO HE'S GOING TO DO THAT, HUH...
ざわ..ざわ..
ざわ
HE'LL TRY TO TAKE ME OUT IN ONE SHOT IN THIS GAME ...!
WHEN GIVEN THE CHANCE...
IS AIMING STRAIGHT FOR THE THROAT AS USUAL
ヒュッ...
AND IN THAT CASE
HE MUST NOT HAVE HAD ANY LUCK IN THE MIDDLE TURNS.
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE RISK INVOLVED
HE'S REFUSING THAT FIRST WIN.
ALTHOUGH HE'S ALLOWED TO PASS ON THE LOWER-VALUE WIN...

A BARED BLADE .....!
ヒュン!!

THAT'S THE FOURTH
北
.....

HE GETS TO HAVE ONE MORE DRAW BEFORE HIS TURN IS OVER ...!!
GH...!
DON'T DRAW IT...!
DON'T DO IT ...!

STOP...!

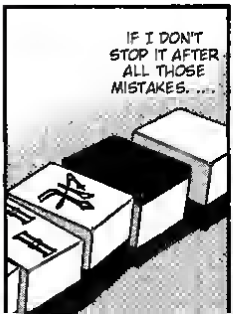


WE REALLY MADE IT...!

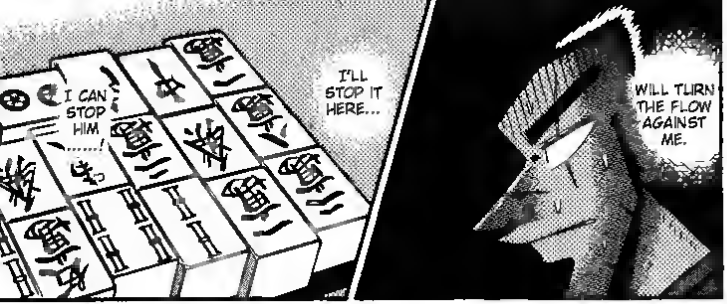
A CHANCE TO DETECT HIS WAIT.

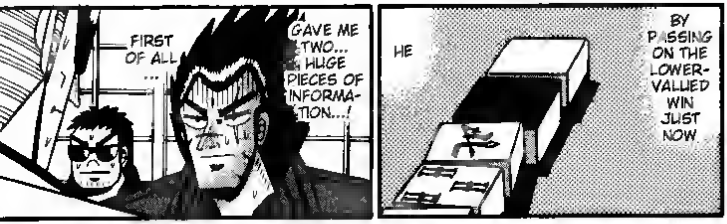
THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN A NARROW ESCAPE—!

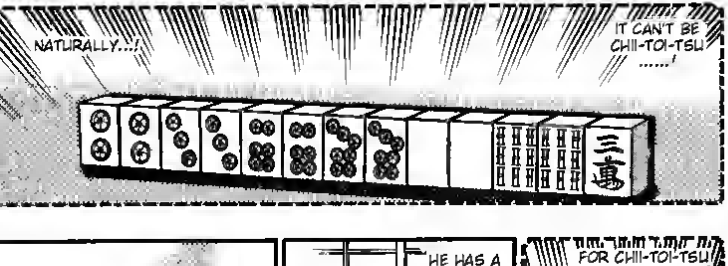
I'LL STOP IT...!


IF I DON'T STOP IT AFTER ALL THOSE MISTAKES....

AFTER HARADA PASSED ON THAT LOWER-VALUE WIN
BUT IT'S OVER NOW...!

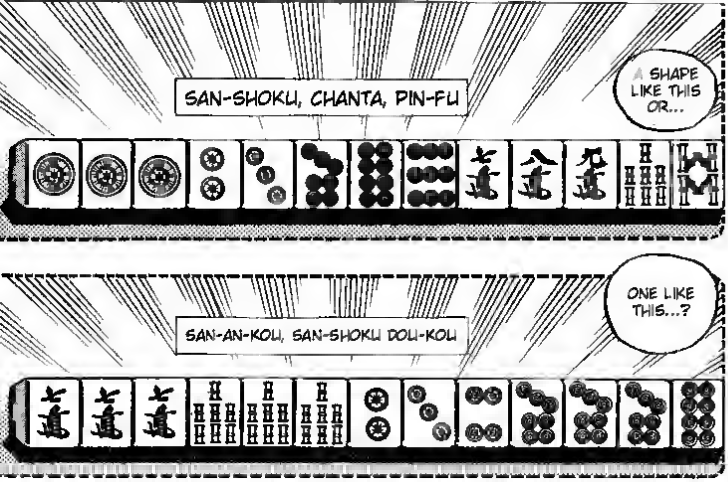

I'LL STOP IT HERE...
I CAN STOP HIM.....!
WILL TURN THE FLOW AGAINST ME.

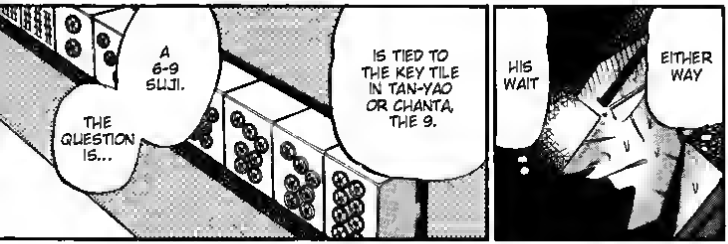

FIRST OF ALL ....
GAVE ME TWO... HUGE PIECES OF INFORMATION...!
HE
BY PASSING ON THE LOWER-VALUED WIN JUST NOW

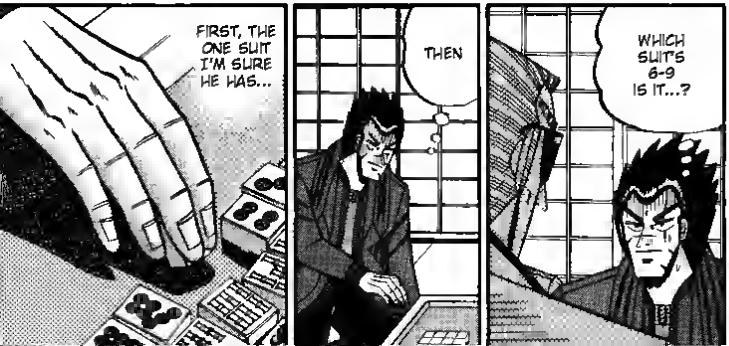

NATURALLY...!
IT CAN'T BE CHII-TOI-TSU .....!

A THREE-SIDED OR FOUR-SIDED WAIT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE
MAYBE A LONG SERIES OF TILES
A MULTI-SIDED WAIT
HE HAS A DOUBLE-SIDED WAIT... OR A DOUBLE PAIR OR SOME-THING
FOR CHII-TOI-TSU AND ITS SINGLE WAIT, THERE ISN'T SUCH A THING AS A LOWER-VALUE WIN.

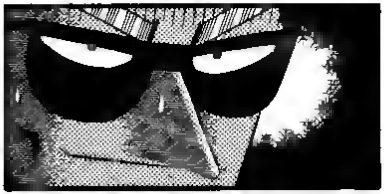
THIS IS BECAUSE
IT PROBABLY ISN'T HON-ITSU.
THIS IS MOSTLY PURE SPECULATION BUT
AND...
CLOSED HON-ITSU, RIICHI, TSUMO IS ALREADY MANGAN.....
IF IT WAS HON-ITSU
.....WHICH MEANS.....
PASSING ON THAT WIN AND AIMING FOR ONE WORTH MORE WOULD NEVER HAPPEN
THEREFORE... MANGAN WOULD BE ENOUGH.
OR AN ATTEMPT AT SAN-AN-KOU
IS HIS HAND TIED TO SAN-SHOKU OR CHANTA...?
IN SHORT...
A LARGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LOW AND HIGH VALUES
HIS HAND HAS

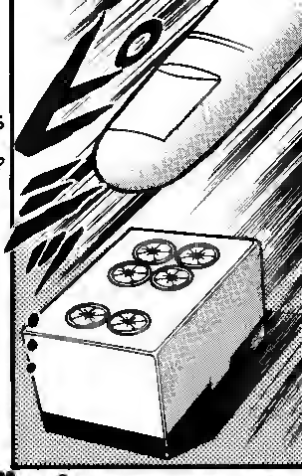

SAN-SHOKU, CHANTA, PIN-FU
A SHAPE LIKE THIS OR...
SAN-AN-KOU, SAN-SHOKU DOU-KOU
ONE LIKE THIS...?


A 6-9 SUJI.
THE QUESTION IS...
IS TIED TO THE KEY TILE IN TAN-YAO OR CHANTA, THE 9.
HIS WAIT
EITHER WAY


FIRST, THE ONE SUIT I'M SURE HE HAS...
THEN
WHICH SUITS 6-9 IS IT...?

IS THIS IT ...!?





ざわ

... ...

WRONG ...!

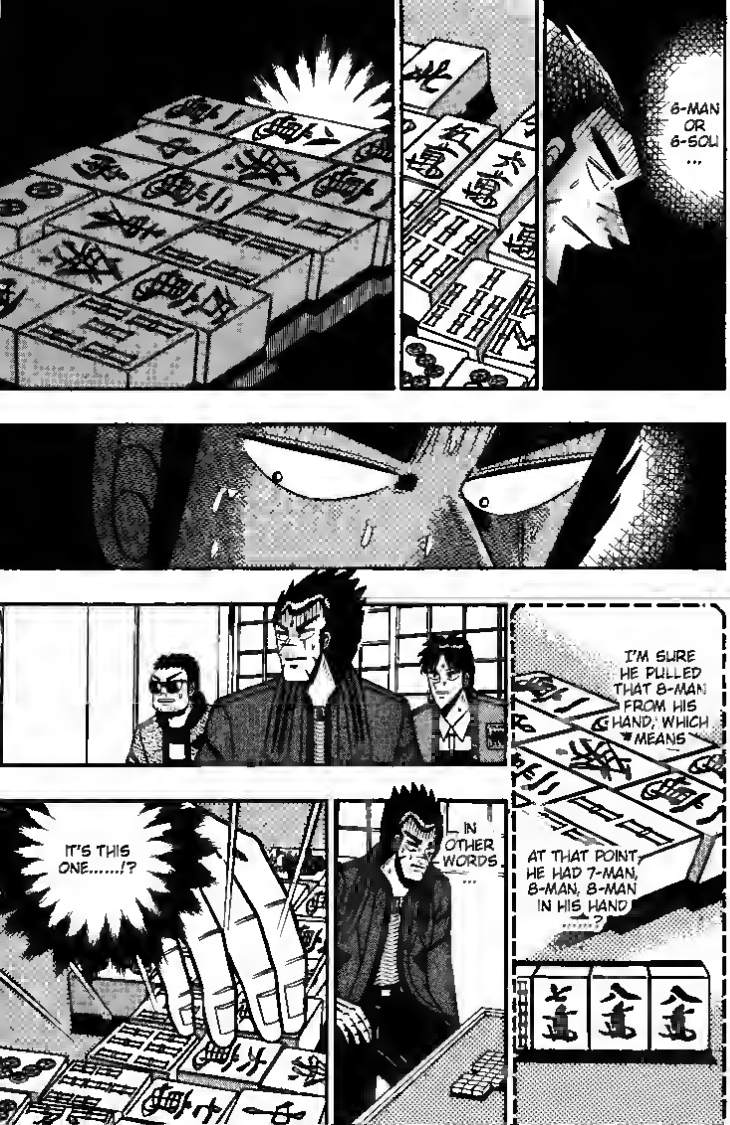
ONE MORE CHANCE TO SELECT HARADA'S WAIT...

HIS SECOND PICK.

ざわ...

.....

ざわ...


6-MAN OR 6-SOU ...
I'M SURE HE PULLED THAT 8-MAN FROM HIS HAND, WHICH MEANS
AT THAT POINT, HE HAD 7-MAN, 8-MAN, 8-MAN IN HIS HAND ...?
IN OTHER WORDS ...
IT'S THIS ONE.....!?

ざあ・・・
.....
.....
Ooo
WRONG ...!
GH...!

BACK TO HARADA ...!
MISJUDGED AT THE VERY END...
WHILE HE WAS... MOSTLY CORRECT ABOUT HARADA'S HAND...
TEN...
ざわ..
ざわ..
ざわ..
FIVE DRAWS ...!
ONCE AGAIN HARADA HAD A CHANCE TO WIN.....!
ON THE 3RD DRAW ...!
ピ

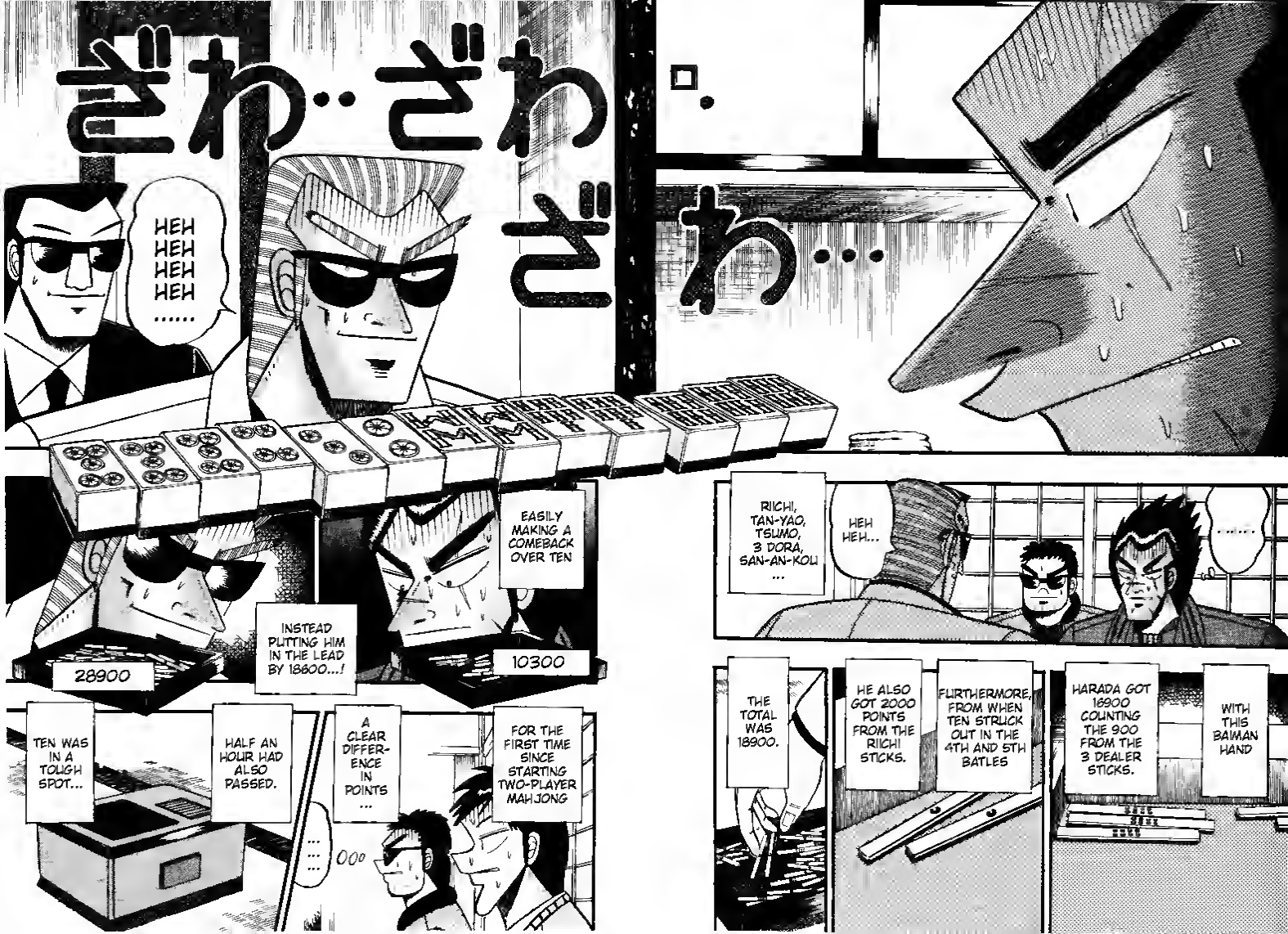
HEH
HEH
HEH
.....

SAN-AN-KOU ...
RIICHI, TSUMO, TAN-YAO, 3 DORA...
I DIDN'T GET THE URA-DORA, BUT .....
チャ!...

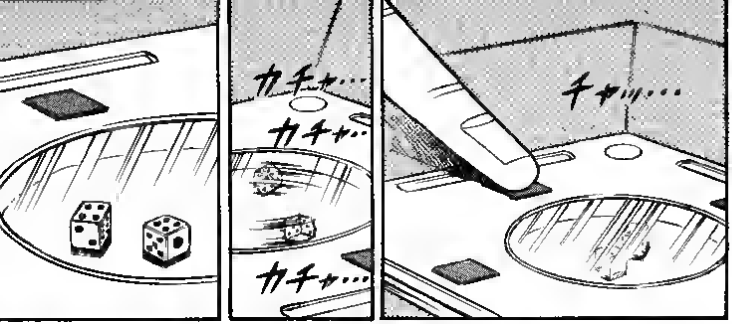
THAT'S BAIMAN ...!

GH...!
第115話「分水嶺」●完

CHAPTER 116
THE RIGHT TO BE DEALER

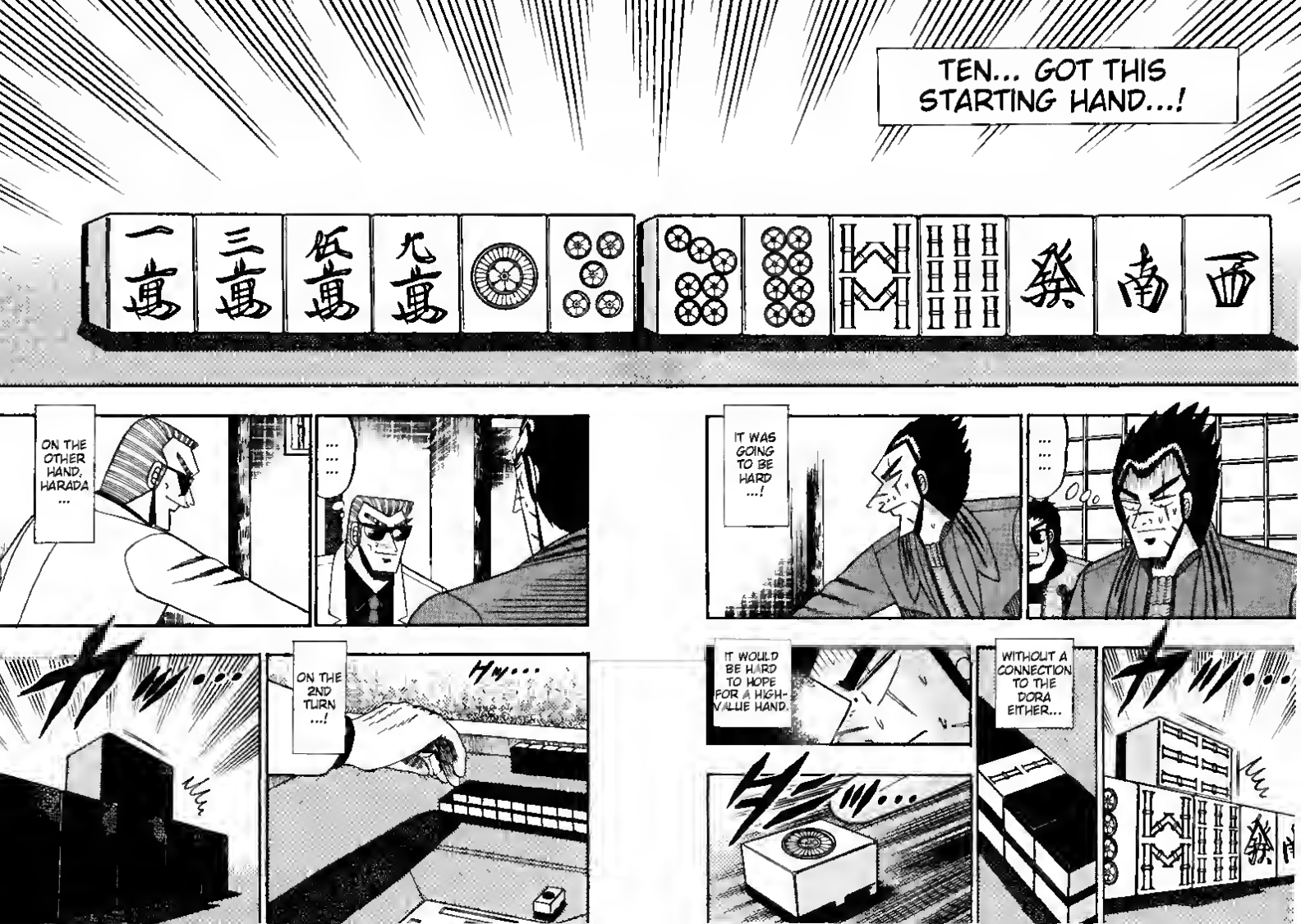

ざわ..ざわ
HEH HEH HEH HEH .....
ざわ...
RICHI, TAN-YAO, TSUMO, 3 DORA, SAN-AN-KOU ...
HEH HEH...
.....
EASILY MAKING A COMEBACK OVER TEN
INSTEAD PUTTING HIM IN THE LEAD BY 18600...!
28900
10300
TEN WAS IN A TOUGH SPOT...
HALF AN HOUR HAD ALSO PASSED.
A CLEAR DIFFER-ENCE IN POINTS ...
FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE STARTING TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG
... ...
Ooo
THE TOTAL WAS 18900.
HE ALSO GOT 2000 POINTS FROM THE RIICHI STICKS.
FURTHERMORE, FROM WHEN TEN STRUCK OUT IN THE 4TH AND 5TH BATLES
HARADA GOT 16900 COUNTING THE 900 FROM THE 3 DEALER STICKS.
WITH THIS BAIMAN HAND

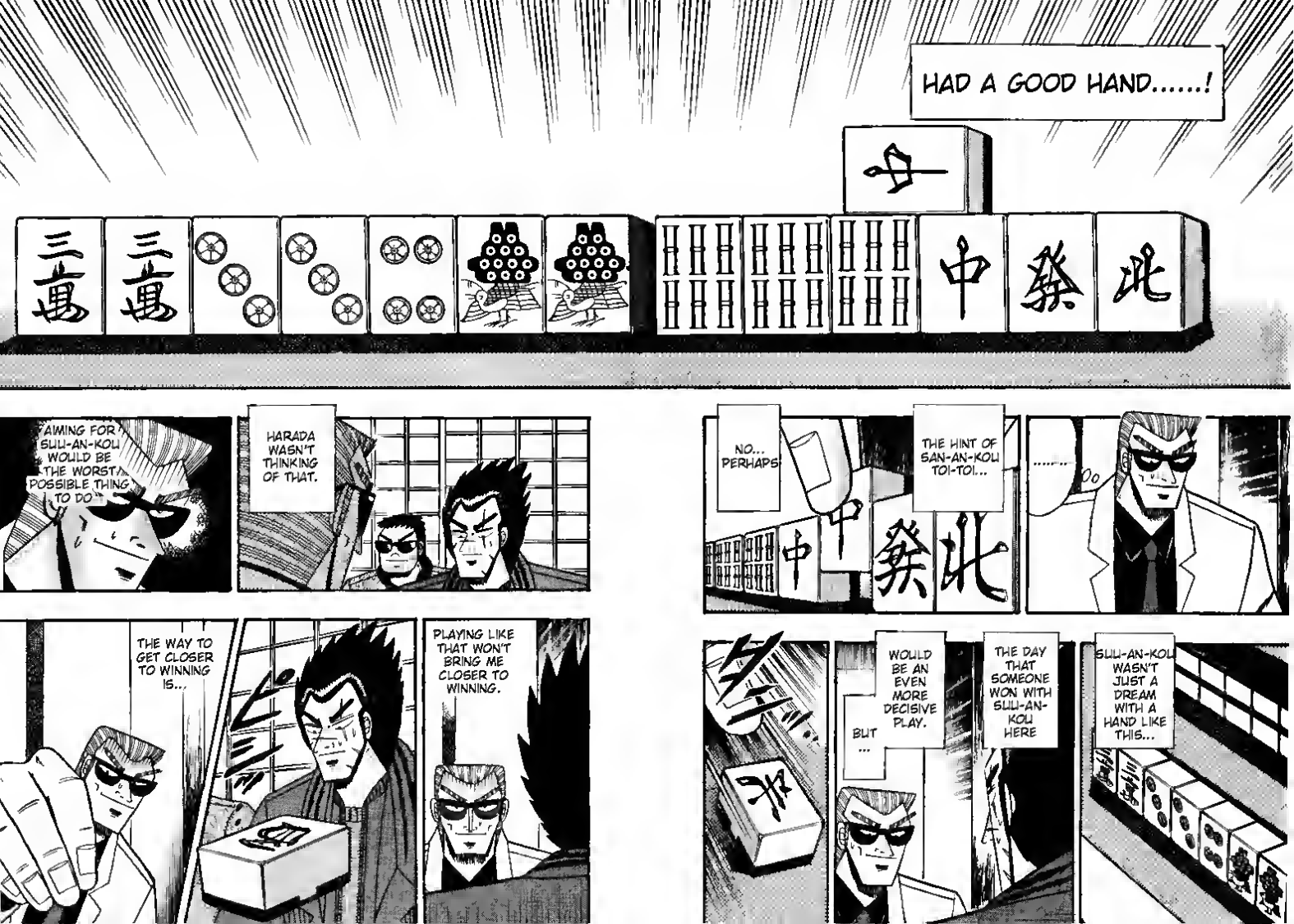
ガシャ
.....
ガシャ
IN WHAT WAS CLEARLY A TOUGH SPOT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS TWO-PLAYER GAME.....!
THE POINT COUNTERS OF THE TWO PLAYERS BECAME POINTS THAT COULD BE WON.
... ...
THE RIICHI STICKS GIVEN OUT AT THE START OF THIS MATCH
ALSO, ALREADY BY THIS TIME
THOSE TEN 1000-POINT STICKS WERE BEING TAKEN.

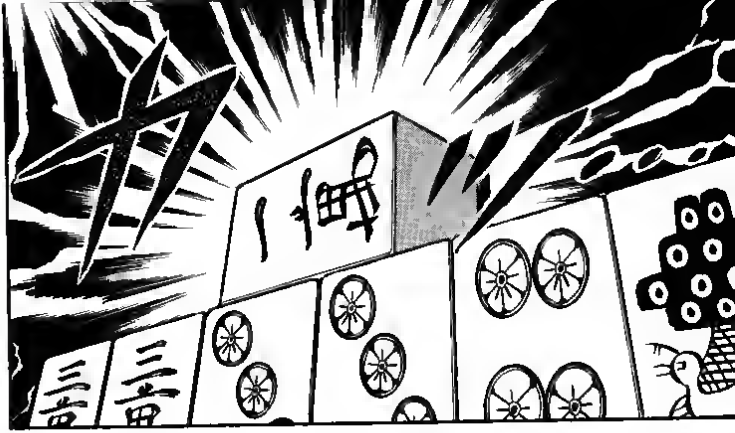

カチャ…
カチャ…
カチャ…
チャリ…

THE 8TH BATTLE BEGAN …!

THE 8TH BATTLE …!
HARADA HAD AN OVERWHELMINGLY SUPERIOR POSITION.
THE BALANCE WAS DESTROYED.


TEN... GOT THIS STARTING HAND...!
ON THE OTHER HAND, HARADA ...
... ...
IT WAS GOING TO BE HARD ...!
... ...
ON THE 2ND TURN ...!
Hm...
IT WOULD BE HARD TO HOPE FOR A HIGH-VALUE HAND.
WITHOUT A CONNECTION TO THE DORA EITHER...


HAD A GOOD HAND.....!
AIMING FOR SUU-AN-KOU WOULD BE THE WORST POSSIBLE THING TO DO.
HARADA WASN'T THINKING OF THAT.
NO... PERHAPS
THE HINT OF SAN-AN-KOU TOI-TOI...
.....
THE WAY TO GET CLOSER TO WINNING IS...
PLAYING LIKE THAT WON'T BRING ME CLOSER TO WINNING.
BUT ...
WOULD BE AN EVEN MORE DECISIVE PLAY.
THE DAY THAT SOMEONE WON WITH SUU-AN-KOU HERE
SUU-AN-KOU WASN'T JUST A DREAM WITH A HAND LIKE THIS...



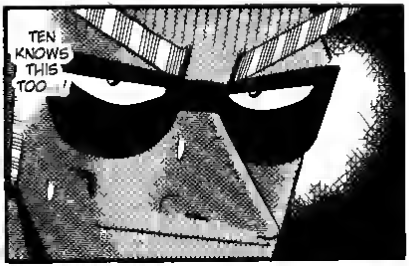
TO NOT GIVE UP THE RIGHT TO BE DEALER
TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN

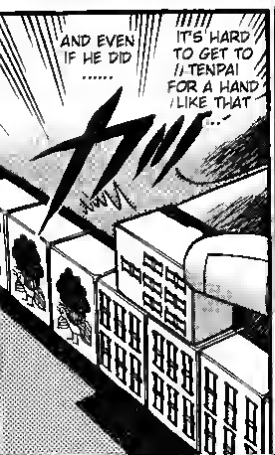
THAT'S BECAUSE.....
NATURALLY I'LL END UP WINNING.
IF TEN DOESN'T GET TO BE THE DEALER.....
AND IN ANOTHER HALF HOUR.....
THAT TAKES PRIORITY OVER EVERYTHING ELSE

THAT'S THE BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS AND FOUR-PLAYER MAHJONG.
IF IT WAS FOUR-PLAYER, NO MATTER HOW OBVIOUS IT WAS
HE'LL WANT TO MAKE A LARGE HAND ...!
IN THIS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG..... TO MAKE A ONE-HIT COMEBACK...
FIRST OF ALL ....
ALL HE'D HAVE TO DO IS TSUMO...!
HE COULD FORCE A HIGH-VALUE HAND THROUGH...
EVEN IF YOU GET INTO TENPAI WITH A HAND LIKE THAT IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG
BUT .....
CHIN-ITSU... KOKUSHI... DAI-SAN-GEN...
無 THE POSSIBILITIES FOR A ONE-HIT COMEBACK ARE LIMITLESS...!
NOTHING BUT A DREAM.....!
IF IT'S DETECTED IN STAGE B, IT'S ALL OVER.

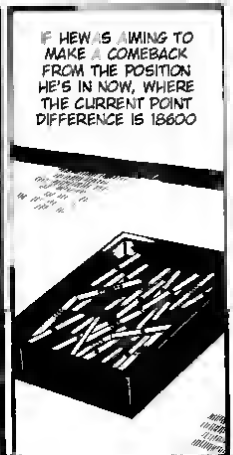
THAT BAIMAN I GOT LAST ROUND WAS A FLUKE..
WHICH MEANS IT'S NOT SO EASY TO MAKE A HIGH-VALUE HAND...!
THE IMPORTANT PART ISN'T MAKING A HIGH-VALUE HAND.....
IT'S MAKING IT HARD TO PREDICT...!
BY THAT DREAM, THAT ILLUSION ...!
YOU CAN'T LET YOURSELF BE SWAYED
TRYING TOO HARD .....!
CHII ...!

THIS MAN ISN'T AIMING FOR A COMEBACK IN ONE HIT.....!


TEN KNOWS THIS TOO!

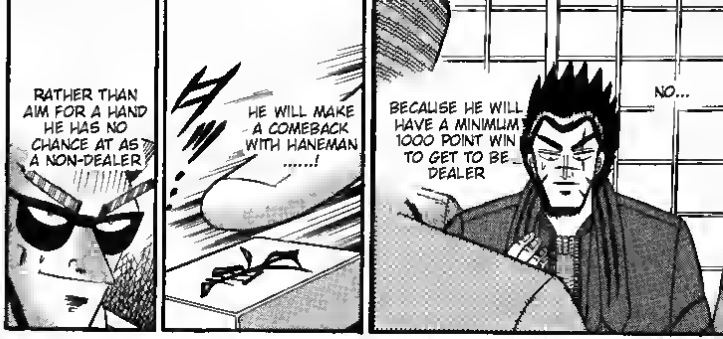

AND EVEN IF HE DID .....
IT'S HARD TO GET TO // TENPAI FOR A HAND LIKE THAT...
TAN!

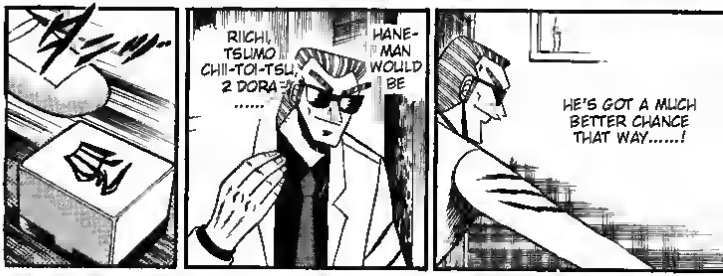
SINCE TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG DOESN'T HAVE ANY POINT EXCHANGE BETWEEN PLAYERS, HE NEEDS TO GET AS FAR AS SANBAIMAN.....


IF HE WAS AIMING TO MAKE A COMEBACK FROM THE POSITION HE'S IN NOW, WHERE THE CURRENT POINT DIFFERENCE IS 18600

IT WOULD BE A HAND LIKE THAT ...!
RIICHI, PIN-FU TSUMO, CHIN-ITSU 2 DORA.....
A SANBAIMAN WOULD BE
IT'LL BE STOPPED IN STAGE B ...!
HE'D NEVER BE ABLE TO CONNECT THAT TO A WIN.
CHII .....!

AND THE RIGHT TO BE DEALER ...!
ANYTHING WILL DO, SINCE HE'S DESPERATELY TRYING TO REGAIN A WIN...
HE'S CALLED TWICE ...
PON ...!
THAT'S RIGHT
HEH HEH ...
MAKING IT ALMOST EVEN...
IF HE'S DEALER, HANEMAN IS 18000 POINTS.
WITH A DIFFERENCE OF 18600, HE NEEDS TO GET SANBAIMAN AS NON-DEALER, BUT

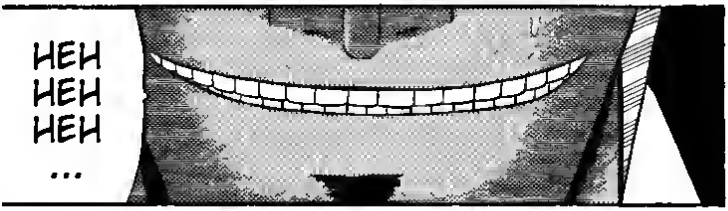

RATHER THAN AIM FOR A HAND HE HAS NO CHANCE AT AS A NON-DEALER
HE WILL MAKE A COMEBACK WITH HANEMAN .....!
BECAUSE HE WILL HAVE A MINIMUM 1000 POINT WIN TO GET TO BE DEALER
NO...

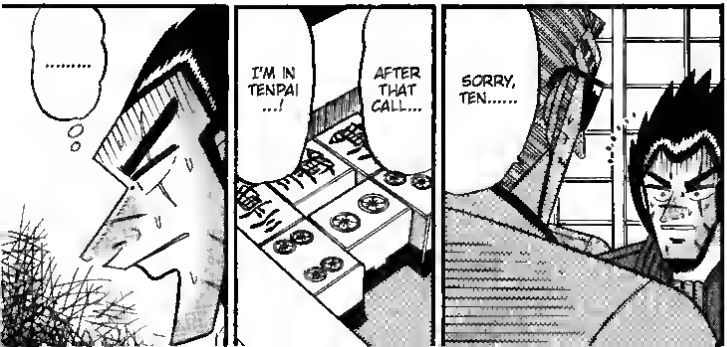

RIICHI, TSUMO CHII-TOI-TSU, 2 DORA ..... HANE-MAN WOULD BE
HE'S GOT A MUCH BETTER CHANCE THAT WAY.....!

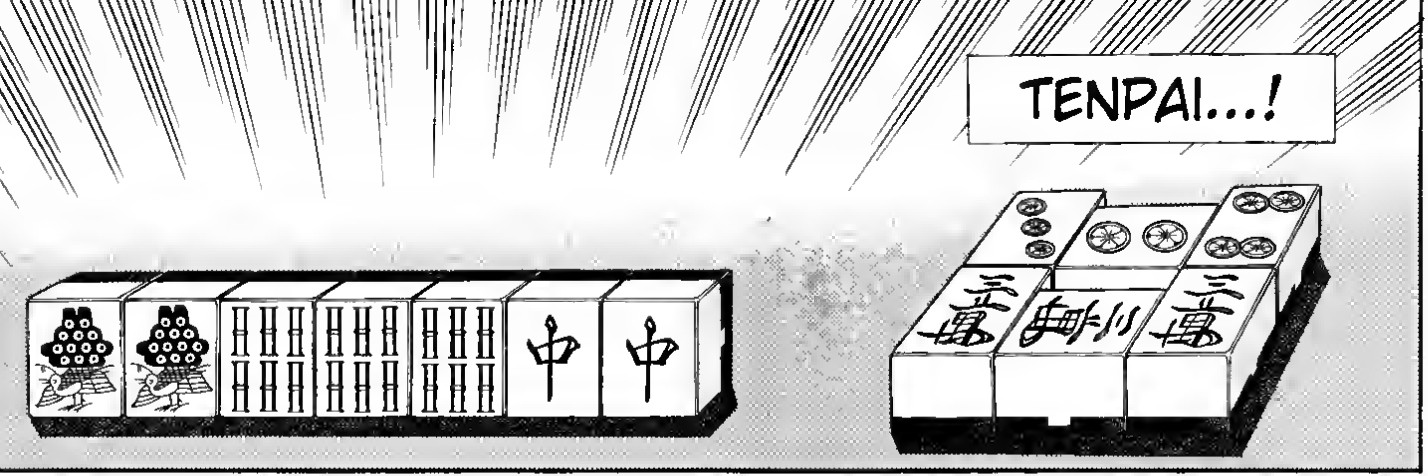
WOULD BE A REALISTIC PATH TO MAKING A COMEBACK ...!
MERGING TWO CONFLICTING FACTORS
DIFFICULT TO PREDICT AND HIGH IN POINTS.
CHII-TOI-TSU WOULD BE A SUITABLE HAND THAT

TEN'S HAND
DORA
AT THIS POINT IN TIME, TEN HAD .....
FROM THAT GARBAGE HAND
REACHED II-SHAN-TEN
ANY WAY YOU LOOKED AT IT.
ONE MORE TILE .....
BUT
UNFORTUNATELY.....

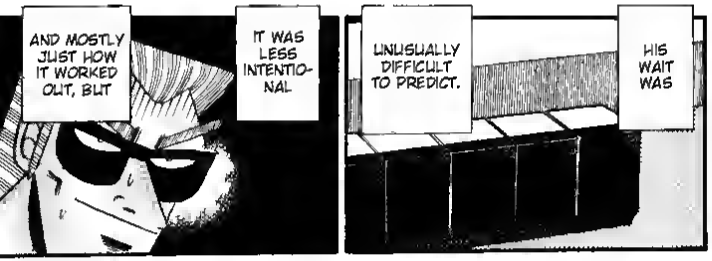
CHII ...!
HIS EFFORTS ENDED THERE ...!


HEH
HEH
HEH
...

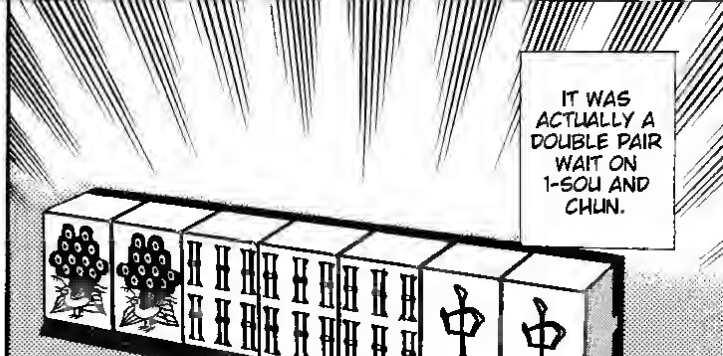

.....
I'M IN TENPAI ...!
AFTER THAT CALL...
SORRY, TEN.....



HARADA GOT THERE FIRST .....!



BUT...
ANYONE WOULD THINK THIS WAS AN OPEN TAN-YAO TO PRESERVE HIS RIGHT TO BE DEALER.
AND THE TWO CALLS ON MIDDLE TILES
WHEN LOOKING AT THESE DISCARDS


IT WAS ACTUALLY A DOUBLE PAIR WAIT ON 1-SOU AND CHUN.

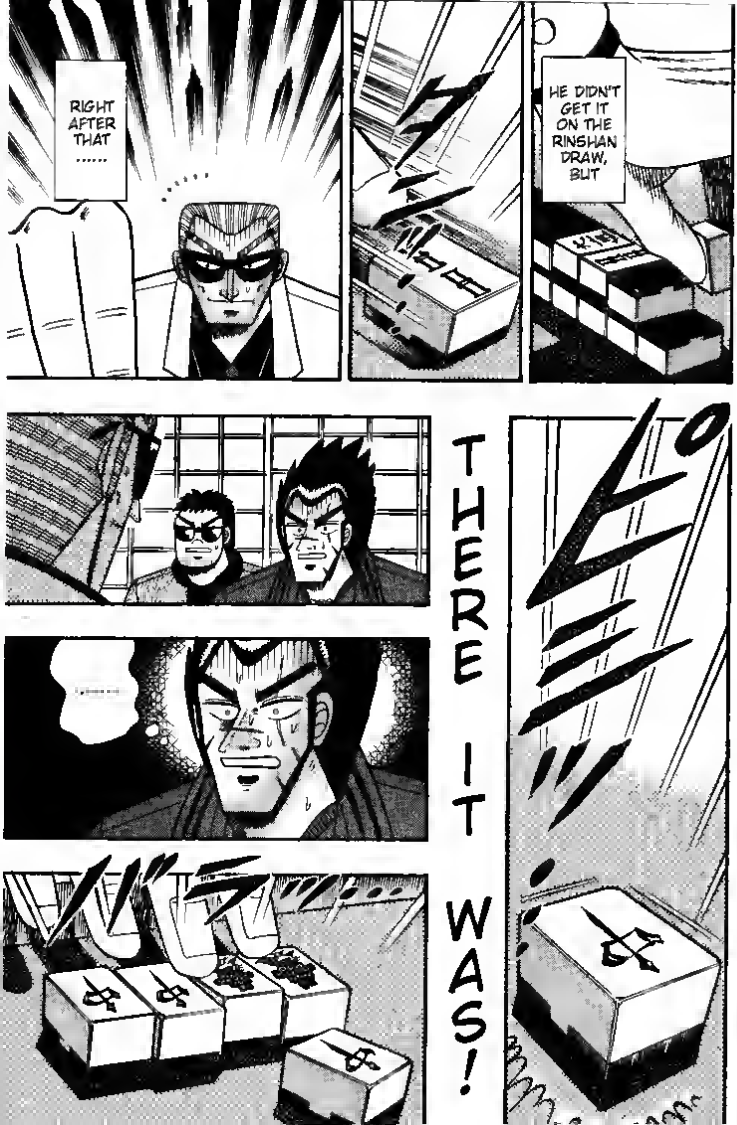
FOR THE 1ST AND 2ND PICK
MISJUDGED THE DIRECTION HIS PREDICTIONS SHOULD TAKE.
HE SELECTED MIDDLE TILES

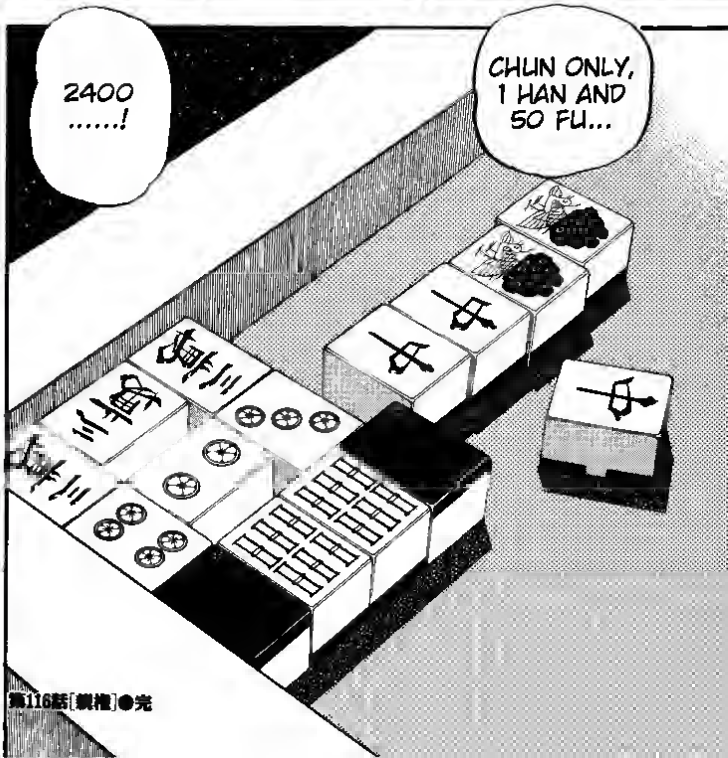
HERE TOO, TEN
AN IRREGULAR SHAPE WHERE IT WOULD ONLY WIN ON ONE SIDE, THE CHUN.

SINCE HARADA CALLED KAN ON THE 6-SOU
...

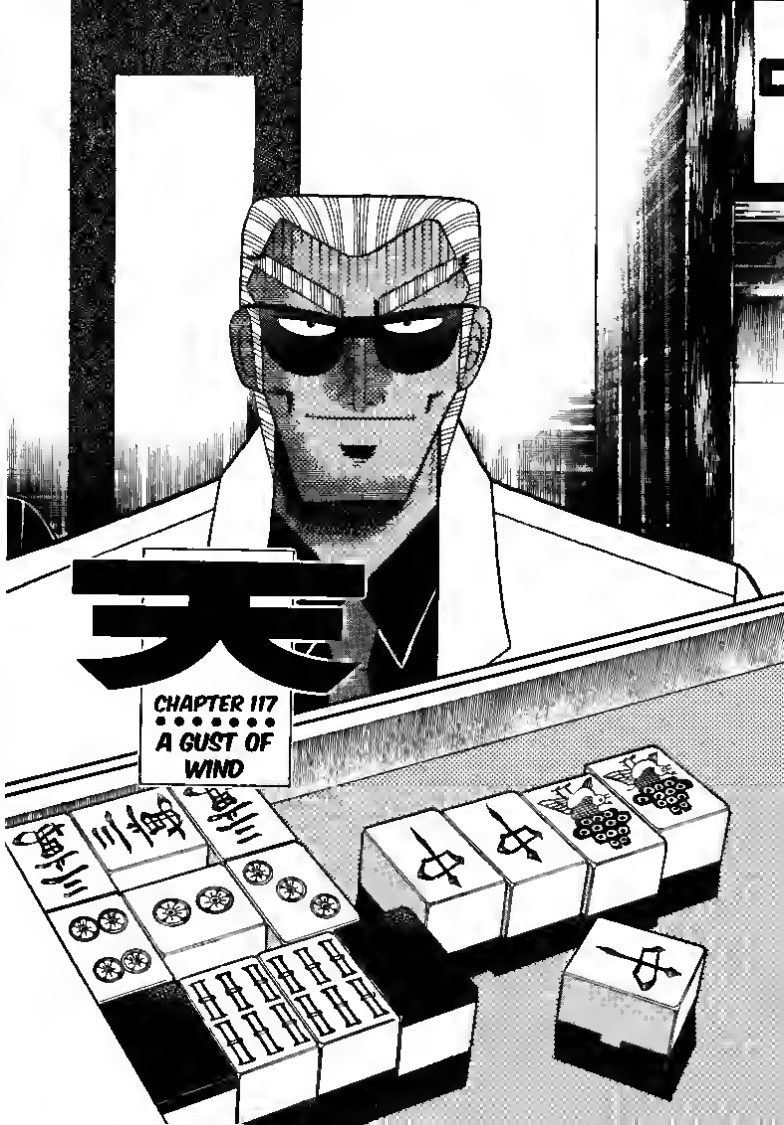
MEAN-WHILE
スッ

CONTIN-UING TO BE WRONG.


RIGHT AFTER THAT .....
HE DIDN'T GET IT ON THE RINSHAN DRAW, BUT
THERE IT WAS!

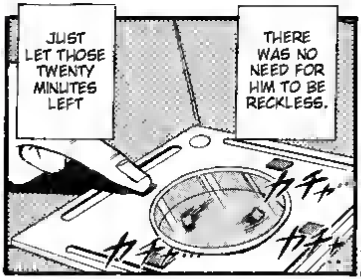


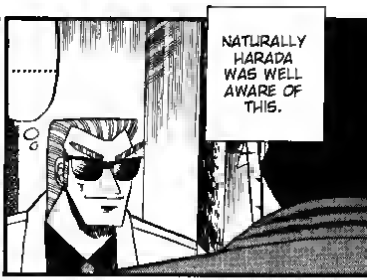
第116話[親権]●完

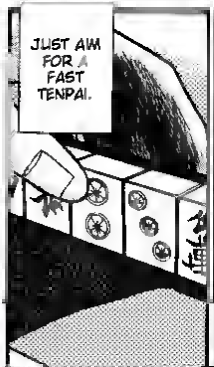

CHAPTER 117
A GUST OF WIND

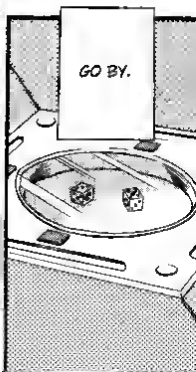
HEH HEH HEH .....
.....
HE WOULDN'T MAKE A COMEBACK
AGAINST THE DIFFERENCE OF 21000 POINTS.
EVEN IF HE WON A DEALER MANGAN AFTER THAT
GETTING TO BE DEALER RIGHT AFTER-WARDS
IF TEN WON WITH MANGAN
IN THIS TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG WITHOUT DIRECT TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN PLAYERS, THIS 21000
IN SHORT
MAKING IT ONLY 20000.
A NON-DEALER MANGAN (ONE DEALER STICK) IS 8300 AND A DEALER MANGAN IS 12000
BY WINNING FOR 2400, HARADA'S POINTS WENT UP TO 31300.
WENT UP TO 21000.
THE DIFFERENCE OF 10300 BETWEEN HIM AND TEN

WAS BASICALLY A SAFE LEAD...!

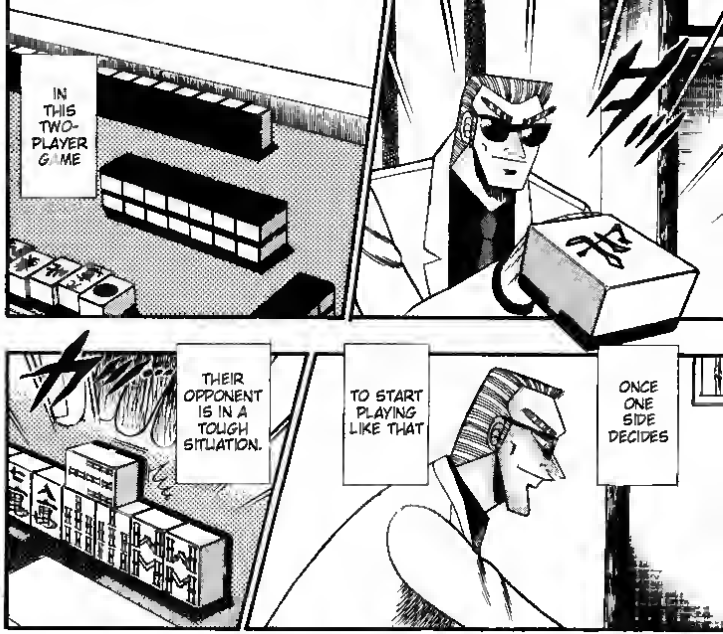

JUST LET THOSE TWENTY MINUTES LEFT
THERE WAS NO NEED FOR HIM TO BE RECKLESS.
カチャ…
カチャ…

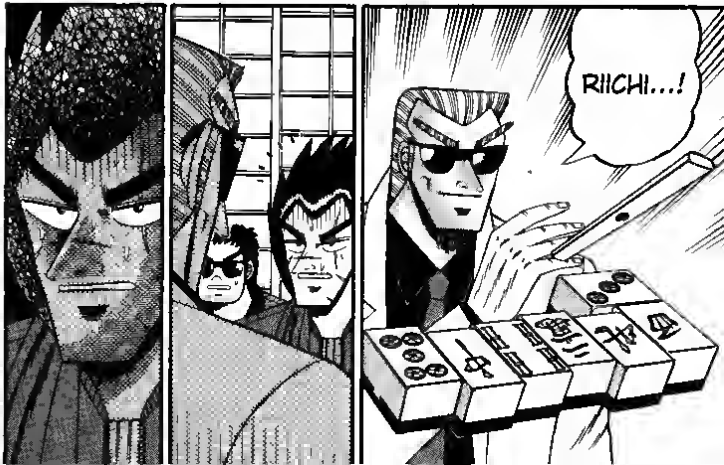

……
NATURALLY HARADA WAS WELL AWARE OF THIS.


JUST AIM FOR A FAST TENPAI.


GO BY.

THAT COULD BE EASILY PREDICTED.
IN OTHER WORDS
IF IT WAS A CHEAP HAND
IT DIDN'T MATTER
ピーン!!!
THAT WAS GOOD ENOUGH.
……
AS LONG AS HE DIDN'T GIVE TEN A CHANCE
JUST GET THERE BEFORE TEN.
ドン!!!


IN THIS TWO-PLAYER GAME
ONCE ONE SIDE DECIDES
TO START PLAYING LIKE THAT
THEIR OPPONENT IS IN A TOUGH SITUATION.


RIICHI...!

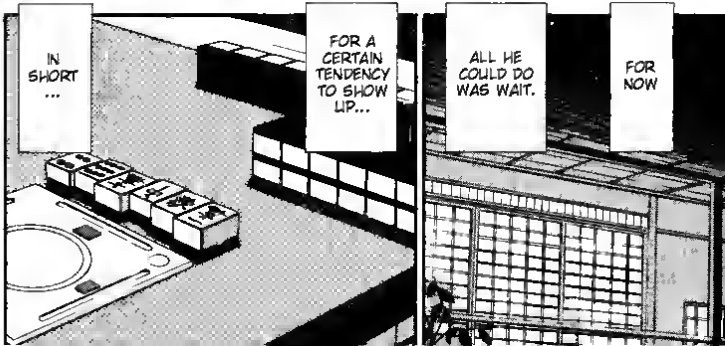
KILLING TIME WITH MAHJONG.
……
……
……
KH……!
THAT VITAL TIME THAT WAS LEFT...
AS LONG AS HE COULD IDLY WASTE AWAY
HAVING HIS WAIT DETECTED WAS FINE.
バラッ
……
……
THAT WAS GOOD ENOUGH ...!
A GAME WHERE HE WASN'T EVEN TRYING TO COMPLETE A HAND.
……

TEN COULDN'T DO THAT.
BUT...
HE HAD TO COMPLETE A HAND...!
IN SHORT
TEN ALSO HAD TO AVOID DETECTION BY HARADA.
...WASN'T ANY GOOD.
IN SHORT, ANY KIND OF TENPAI LIKE HARADA
HE HAD TO DIVIDE HIS ATTENTION BETWEEN ALL THOSE THINGS.
MAKING A HAND THAT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO PREDICT ...!

CHII ...!
THAT'S TENPAI .....!
HEH HEH HEH ...
GH.....!
.....
.....
THAT
COMPARED TO HARADA WHO COULD USE ANY TENPAI
WAS A HUGE DIFFER-ENCE ...!

TEN WAS STRUGGLING ...!

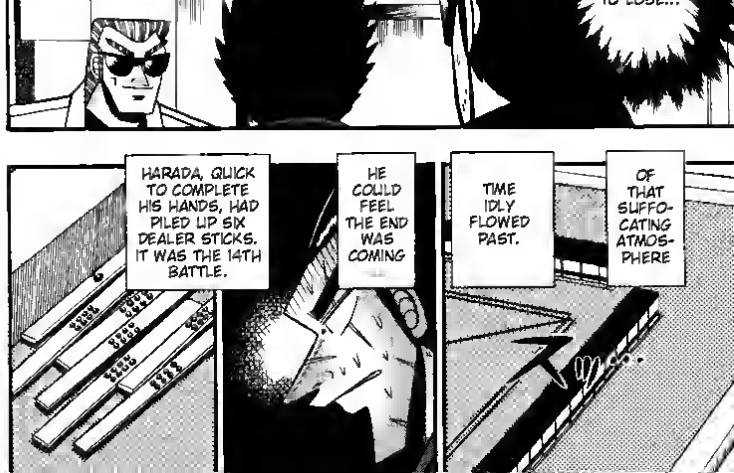
THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD STRIKE AT HARADA.
THE USUAL FLOW..... WITH HIS STARTING HAND


IN SHORT ...
FOR A CERTAIN TENDENCY TO SHOW UP...
ALL HE COULD DO WAS WAIT.
FOR NOW

FOR A HAND THAT WAS FAST AND AT THE SAME TIME
HAD NATURAL CAMOUFLAGE...
THAT KIND OF STARTING HAND .....!
DRAW ...!
.....
IF HE CAN'T GET A HAND LIKE THAT
IT'S ALL OVER .....
IT'LL JUST HAVE BEEN TEN'S DESTINY ...
TO LOSE ...
IF A GUST OF WIND DOESN'T BLOW HIS WAY.....

HE'LL LOSE ...!

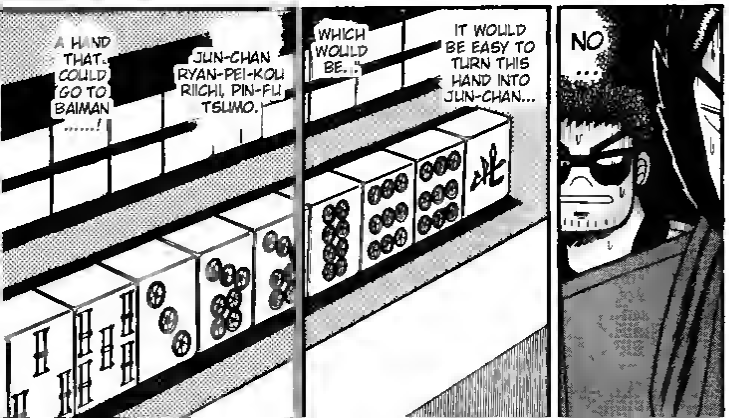
IN THE MIDST
HE'LL BE FORCED TO LOSE...

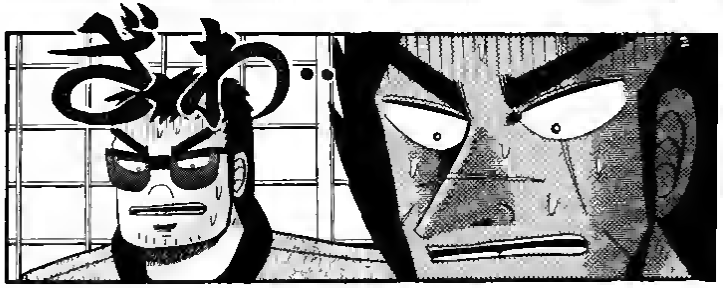

HARADA, QUICK TO COMPLETE HIS HANDS, HAD PILED UP SIX DEALER STICKS. IT WAS THE 14TH BATTLE.
HE COULD FEEL THE END WAS COMING
TIME IDLY FLOWED PAST.
OF THAT SUFFO-CATING ATMOS-PHERE

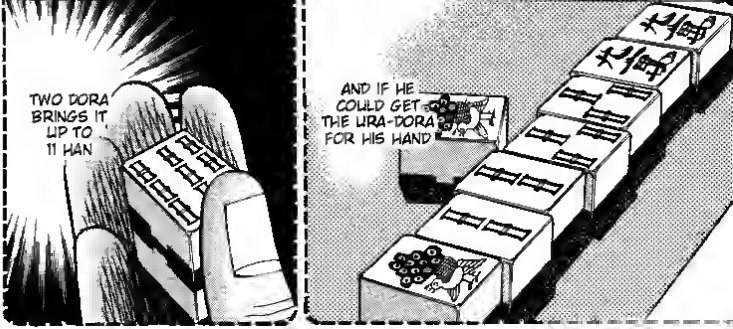
IT CAME TO HIM .....!
URGH ...!
THE WHISPER OF A COMEBACK WIN...!

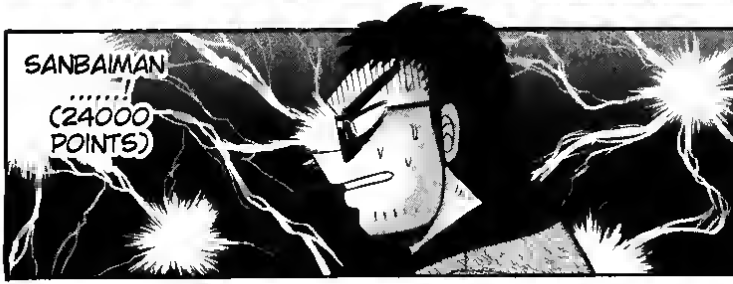
A STARTING HAND THAT HAD A PULSE...!

CHANTA RYAN-PEI-KOU: HANEMAN...!


A HAND THAT COULD GO TO BAIMAN.....!
JUN-CHAN RYAN-PEI-KOU RICHI, PIN-FU TSUMO.
WHICH WOULD BE..?
IT WOULD BE EASY TO TURN THIS HAND INTO JUN-CHAN...
NO...




TWO DORA BRINGS IT UP TO 11 HAN
AND IF HE COULD GET THE URA-DORA FOR HIS HAND

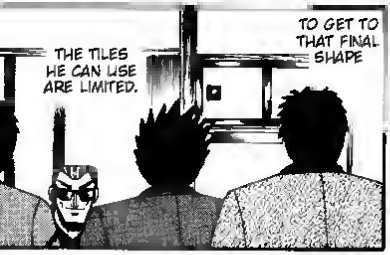

SANBAIMAN ..... ! (24000 POINTS)

HE CAN MAKE A COMEBACK IN ONE HIT ..... !

RIGHT NOW THE POINT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND HARADA IS 20000...

A FLASH OF LIGHT-NING ..... !

A HAND THAT COULD DETERMINE HIS FATE .....!

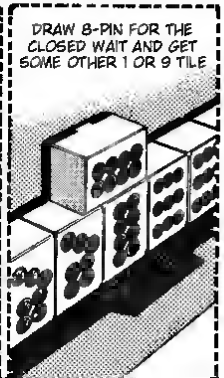

THE TILES HE CAN USE ARE LIMITED.
TO GET TO THAT FINAL SHAPE

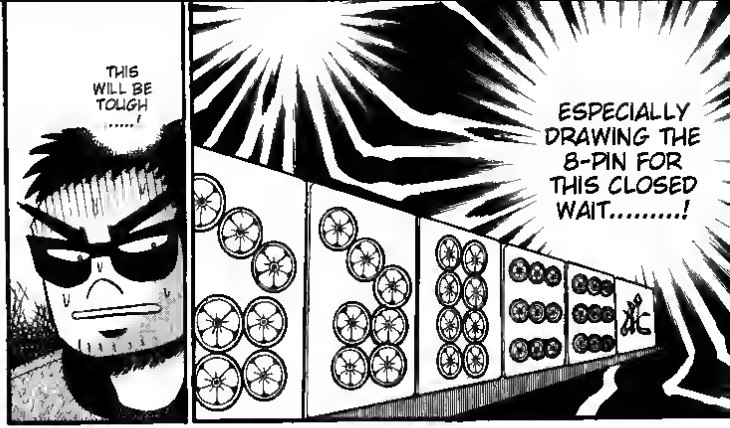
THE PROBLEM IS.....

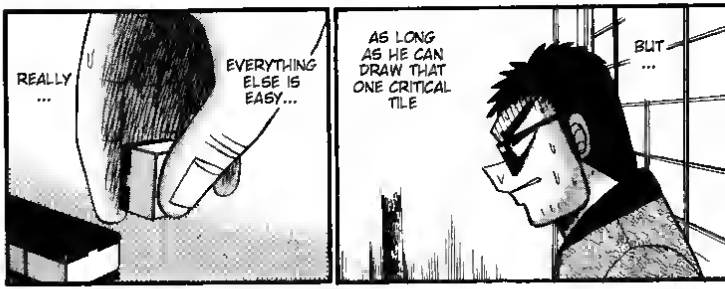
.....

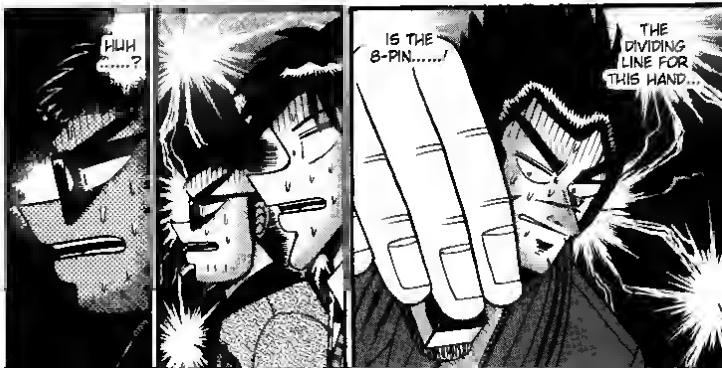
IT'LL BE TOUGH ...!

AND THEN ON THE 1-4-SOU DRAW 1-SOU .....
AND RIICHI ...!

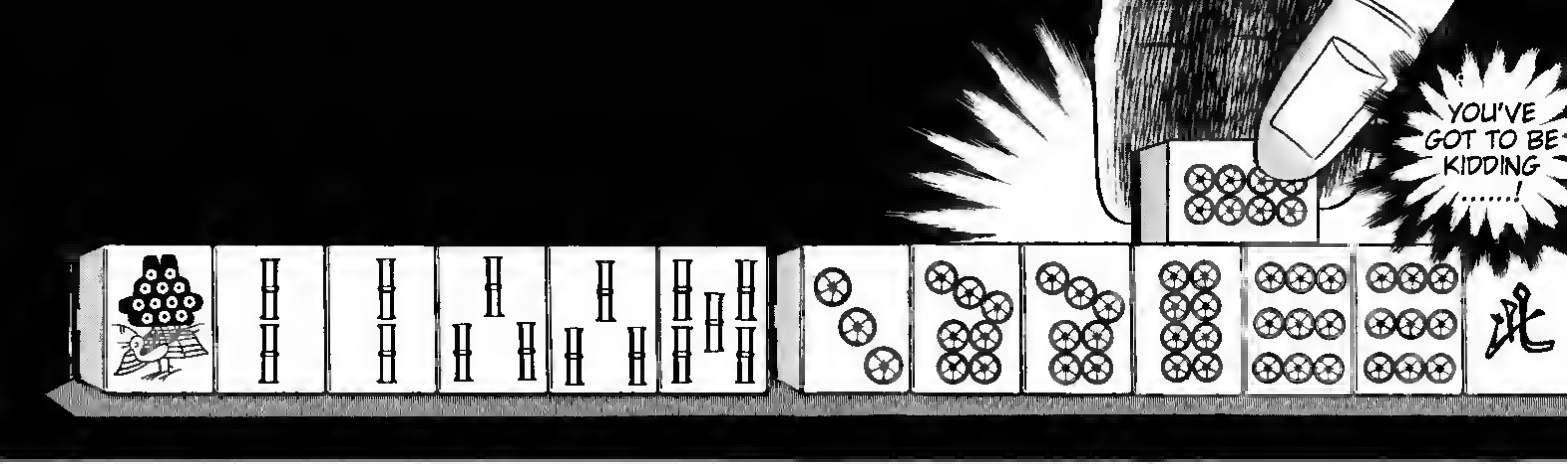

DRAW 8-PIN FOR THE CLOSED WAIT AND GET SOME OTHER 1 OR 9 TILE


THIS WILL BE TOUGH .....!
ESPECIALLY DRAWING THE 8-PIN FOR THIS CLOSED WAIT.....!

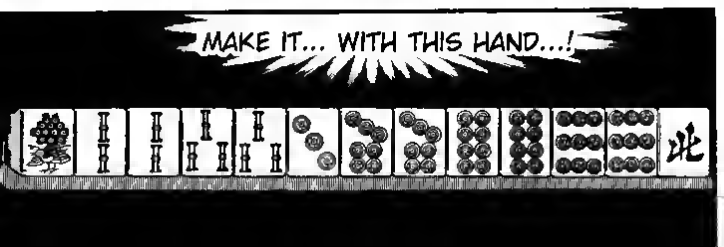

REALLY ...
EVERYTHING ELSE IS EASY...
AS LONG AS HE CAN DRAW THAT ONE CRITICAL TILE
BUT ...


HUH .....?
IS THE 8-PIN.....!
THE DIVIDING LINE FOR THIS HAND...

GH .....!
COULD IT BE ..... !?


YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING.....!

MAKE IT.....!


MAKE IT... WITH THIS HAND...!

THE MOST DIFFICULT POINT...
HE GOT IT RIGHT AT THE START.....!
URGH...!

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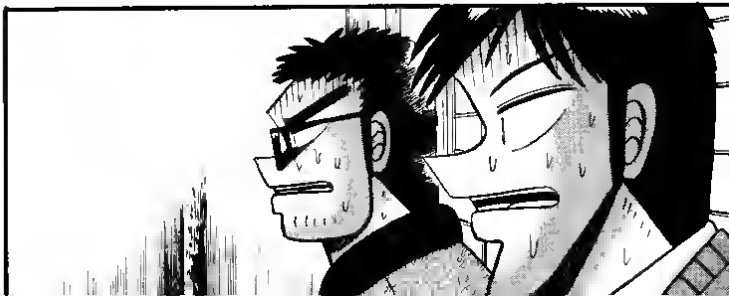
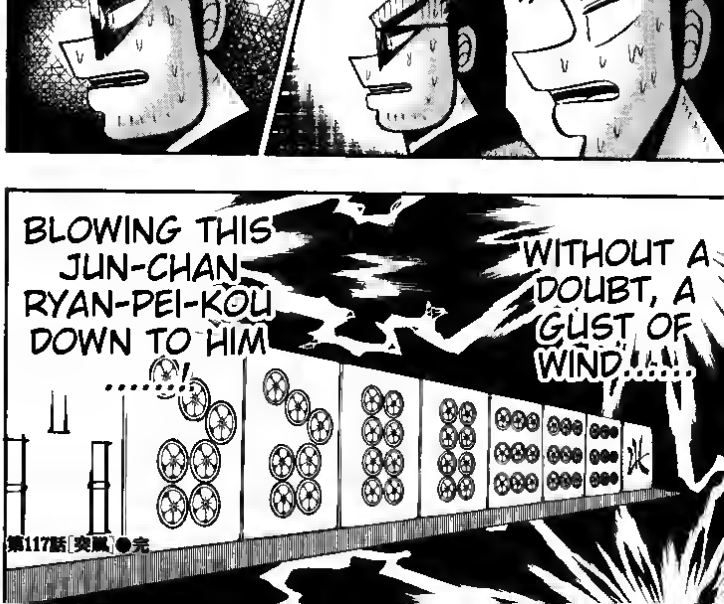
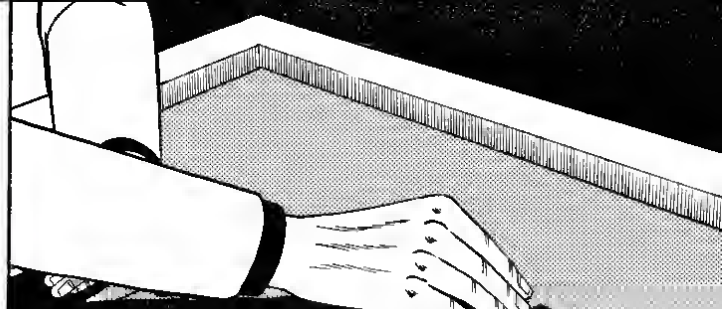


URGH ...!
A USEFUL TILE AGAIN .....
THE 1 OR 9 TILE HE WANTED .....!

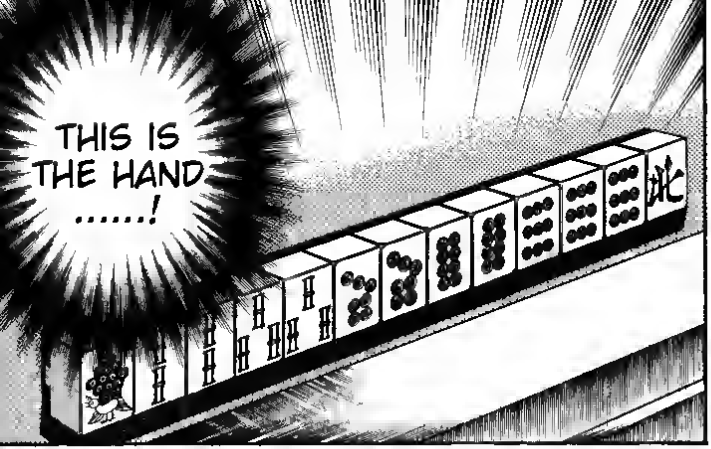
IT'S A GUST OF WIND.....!


BLOWING THIS JUN-CHAN RYAN-PEI-KOU DOWN TO HIM .....!
WITHOUT A DOUBT, A GUST OF WIND.....
第117話［突風］●完

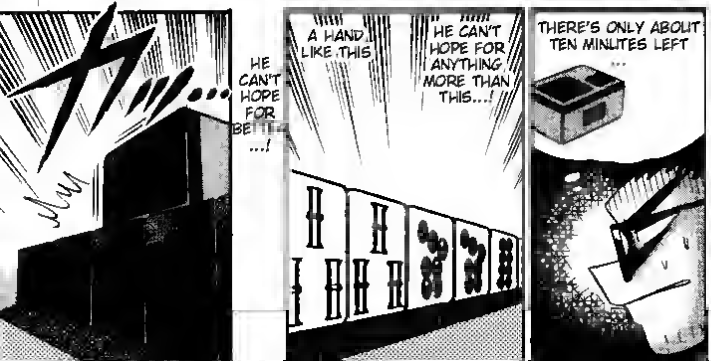
天
CHAPTER 118
A FLASH OF LIGHTNING

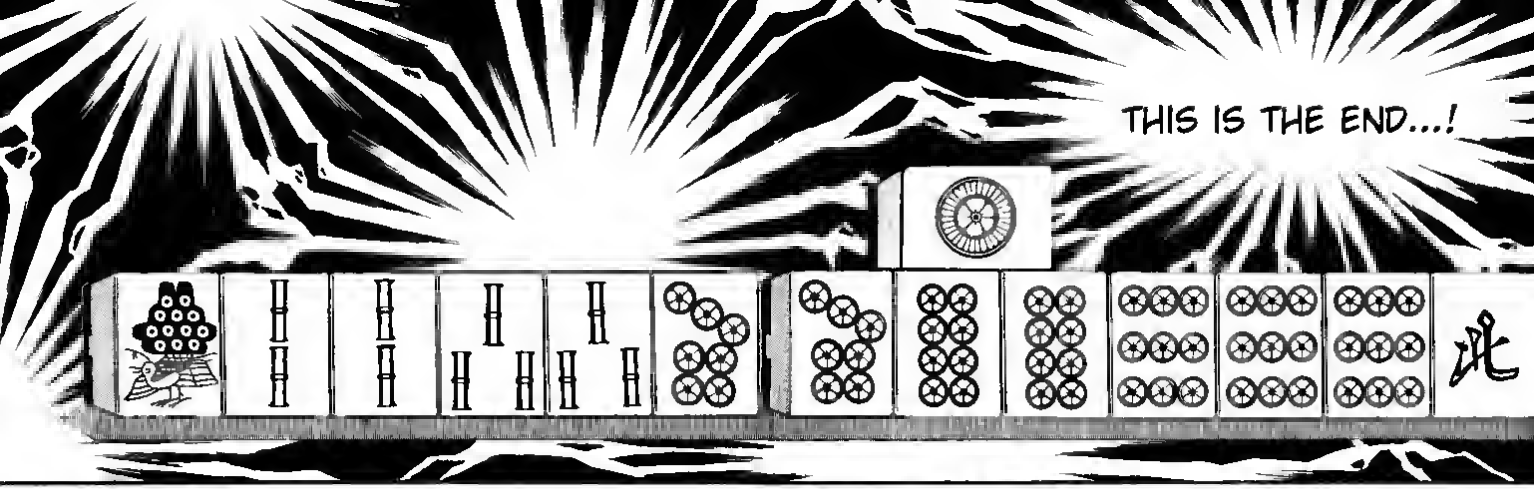


ざわ…

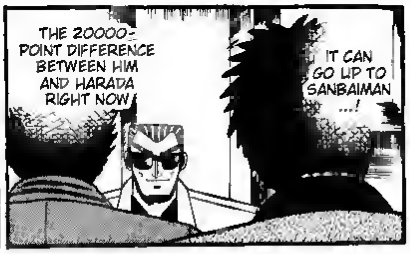

THIS IS THE HAND .....!

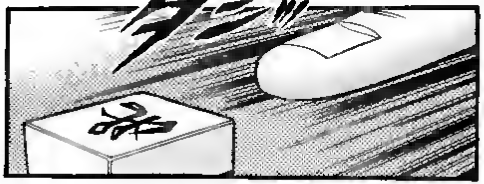
SETTLING TEN'S FATE .....!
WILL DETERMINE IF HE WINS OR LOSES
WHETHER OR NOT THIS HAND MAKES IT

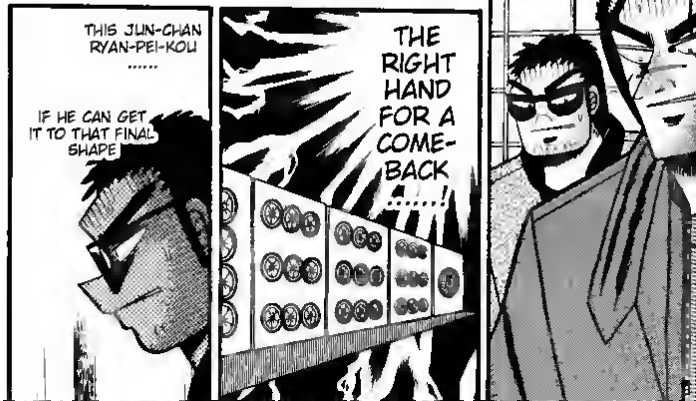

HE CAN'T HOPE FOR BE...!
A HAND LIKE THIS
HE CAN'T HOPE FOR ANYTHING MORE THAN THIS...!
THERE'S ONLY ABOUT TEN MINUTES LEFT ...

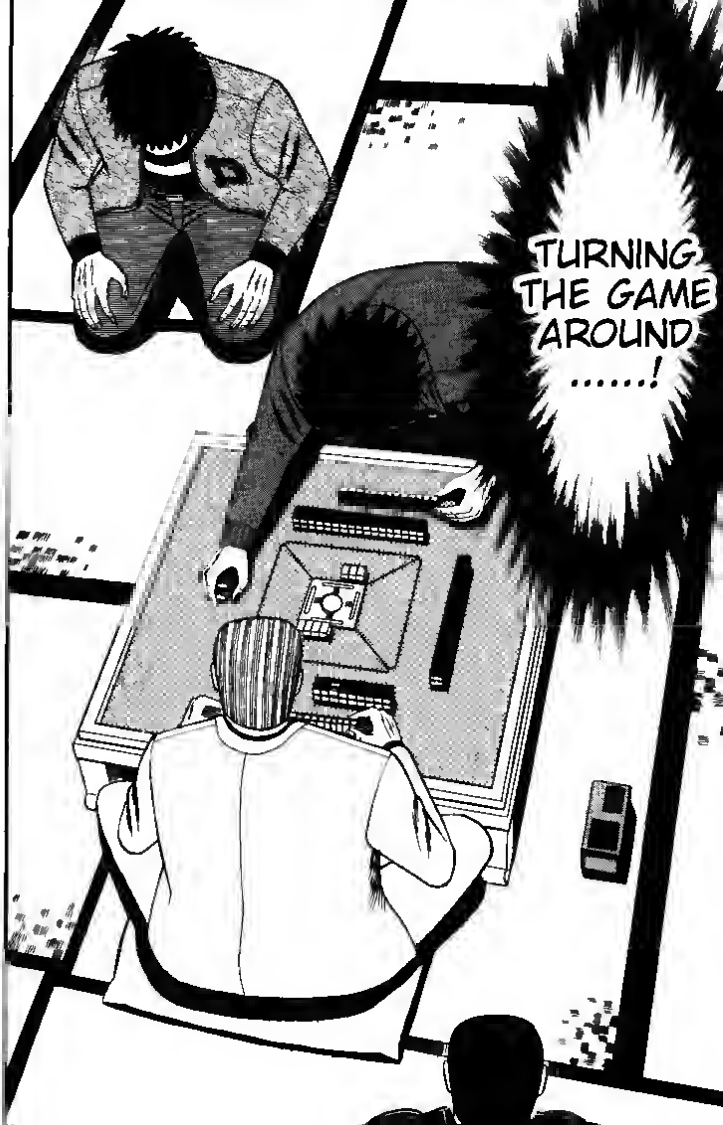

THIS IS THE END...!

WILL VANISH IN ONE HIT...!

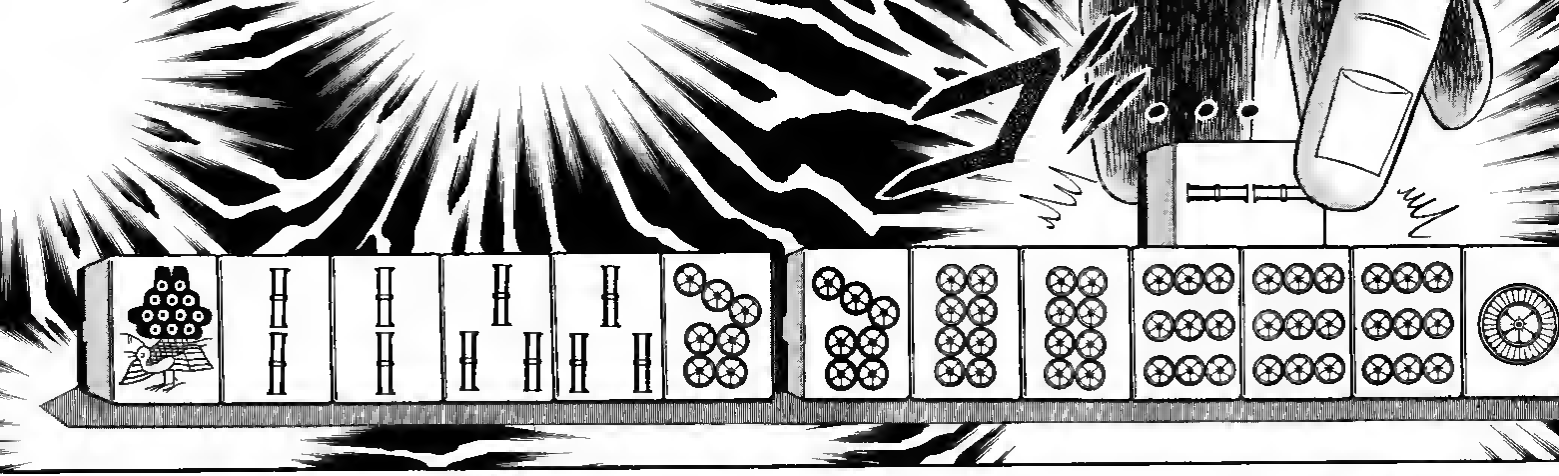

THE 20000-POINT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND HARADA RIGHT NOW
IT CAN GO UP TO SANBAIMAN ...!



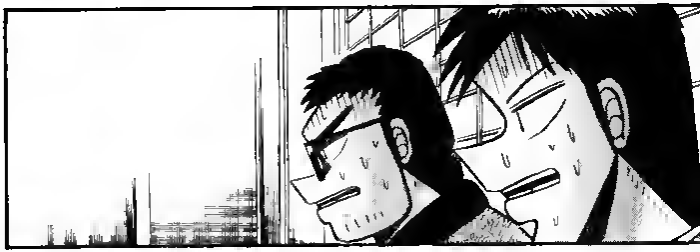

THIS JUN-CHAN RYAN-PEI-KOU .....
IF HE CAN GET IT TO THAT FINAL SHAPE
THE RIGHT HAND FOR A COME-BACK .....!


TURNING THE GAME AROUND .....!

URGH
...!

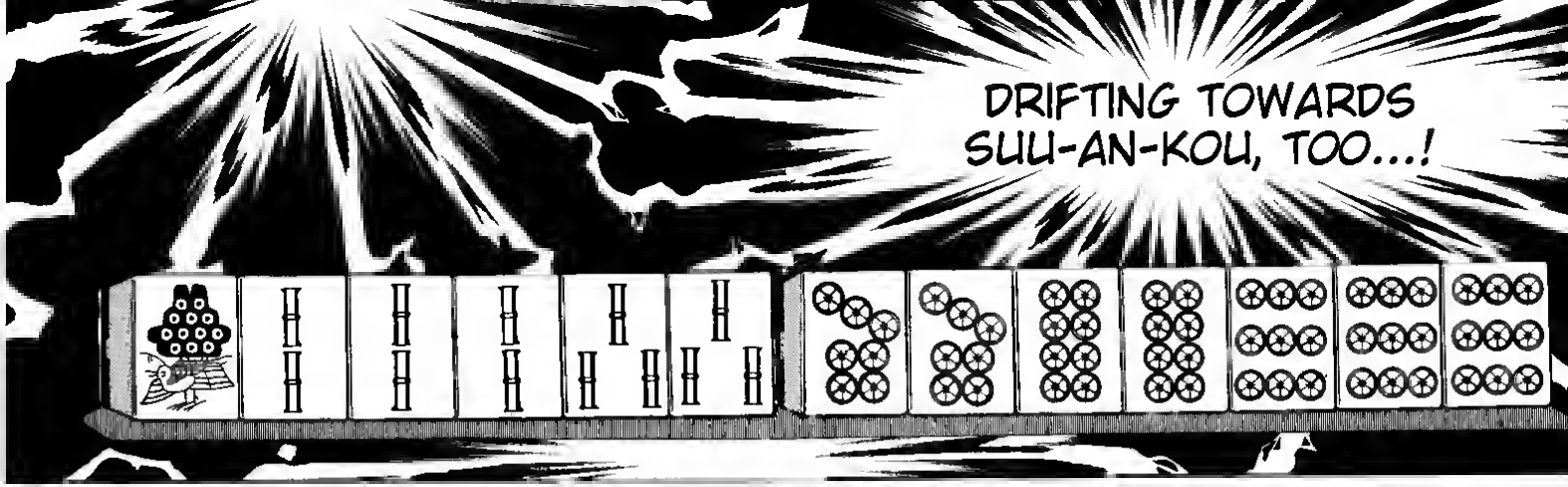


BUILDING UP THE 2-SOU...!

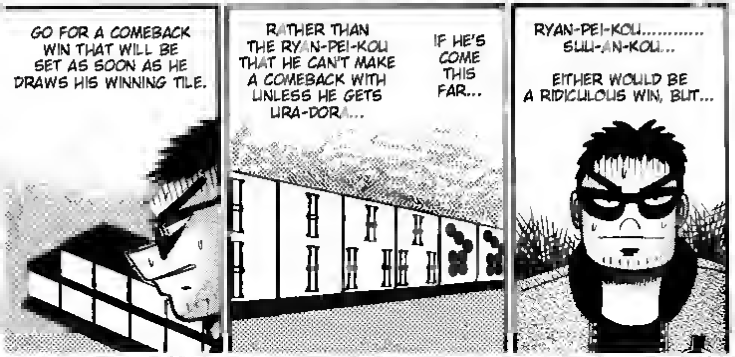


RYAN-PEI-KOU, PLUS...
WITH THIS 2-SOU .....

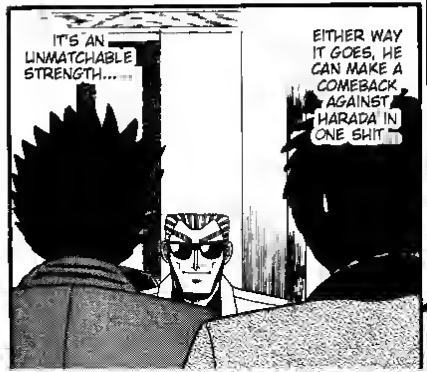
HE'S GOT IT ...!


DRIFTING TOWARDS SUU-AN-KOU, TOO...!

...
GODLY, EVEN...!


GO FOR A COMEBACK WIN THAT WILL BE SET AS SOON AS HE DRAWS HIS WINNING TILE.
RATHER THAN THE RYAN-PEI-KOU THAT HE CAN'T MAKE A COMEBACK WITH UNLESS HE GETS URA-DORA...
IF HE'S COME THIS FAR...
RYAN-PEI-KOU..... SUU-AN-KOU...
EITHER WOULD BE A RIDICULOUS WIN, BUT...

IT'S CHANGED .....!


IT'S AN UNMATCHABLE STRENGTH...
EITHER WAY IT GOES, HE CAN MAKE A COMEBACK AGAINST HARADA IN ONE SHIT

Le

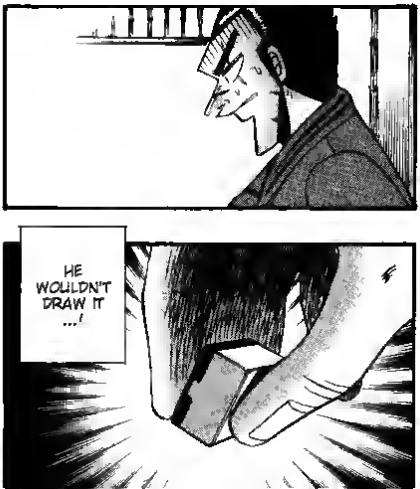
SUU-AN-KOU
.....!

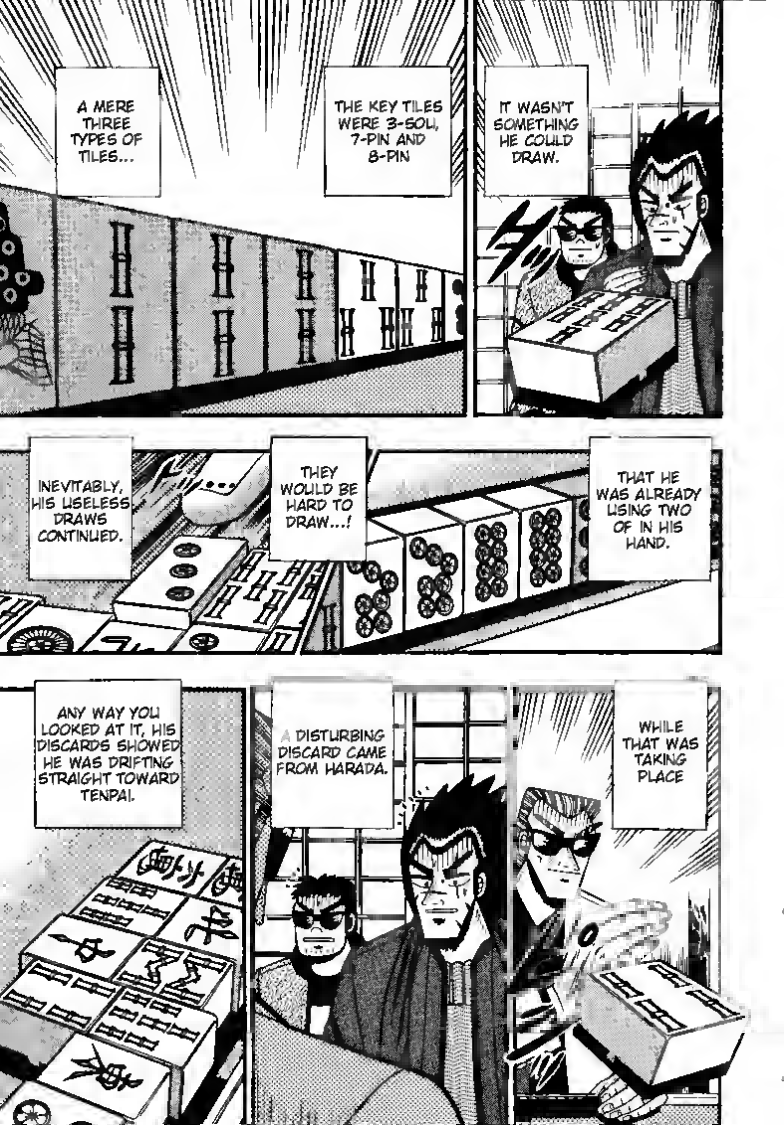
IN SHORT
.....

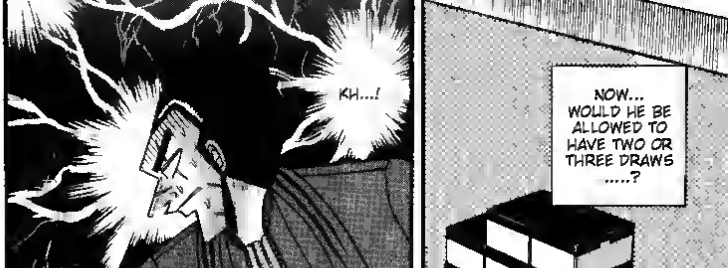
HE'D PREFER SUU-AN-KOU...!

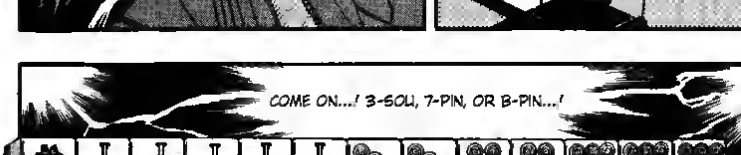
3-SOU OR
7-PIN OR
8-PIN.....!
3-SOU OR
7-PIN OR
8-PIN...!
BUT
...

THIS WAS THE HARD PART...!
OF COURSE


HE WOULDN'T DRAW IT ...!


A MERE THREE TYPES OF TILES...
THE KEY TILES WERE 3-SOU, 7-PIN AND 8-PIN
IT WASN'T SOMETHING HE COULD DRAW.
INEVITABLY, HIS USELESS DRAWS CONTINUED.
THEY WOULD BE HARD TO DRAW...!
THAT HE WAS ALREADY USING TWO OF IN HIS HAND.
ANY WAY YOU LOOKED AT IT, HIS DISCARDS SHOWED HE WAS DRIFTING STRAIGHT TOWARD TENPAI.
A DISTURBING DISCARD CAME FROM HARADA.
WHILE THAT WAS TAKING PLACE


KH...!
NOW... WOULD HE BE ALLOWED TO HAVE TWO OR THREE DRAWS .....?


COME ON...! 3-SOU, 7-PIN, OR 8-PIN...!

SINCE DRAWING 2-SOU
A WASTED DRAW AGAIN.
BUT .....

AND THEN
HEH HEH HEH ...
THIS MADE SIX WASTED DRAWS IN A ROW.

FINALLY...!

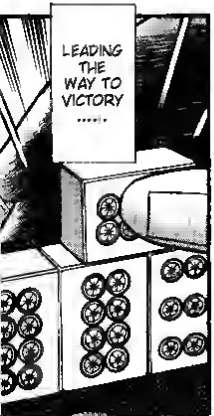
IT RANG ...!
チャッ...!
THE BELL OF DESTINY, TELLING THEM THAT THERE WERE TEN MINUTES LEFT.
HEH HEH HEH ...
AT LONG LAST...
AT LONG LAST, IN ANOTHER TEN MINUTES
THEN ...
ONCE THE ALARM CLOCK GOES OFF A SECOND TIME, IN THAT ROUND
THE GAME WILL BE OVER.
SUF-FER-ING ...!

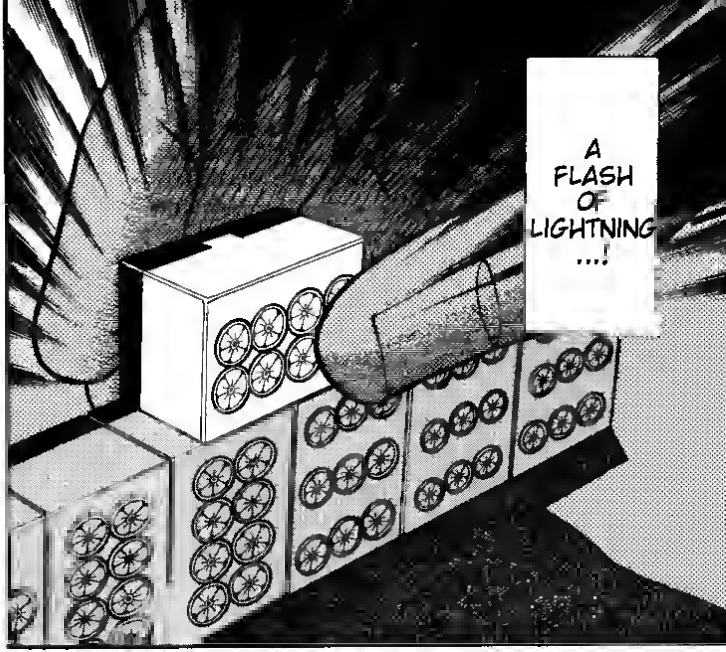
THERE WAS LITTLE TIME LEFT .....
RIGHT NOW, IF HARADA
WAS ALLOWED TO GET INTO TENPAI ONE STEP AHEAD OF HIM
IT WOULD BE OVER ...!
THIS HAND WOULD NEVER HAVE A CHANCE
AND DIE AN IGNOBLE DEATH ...!
WHICH WOULD MEAN ...
TEN'S CHANCES OF WINNING, TOO...

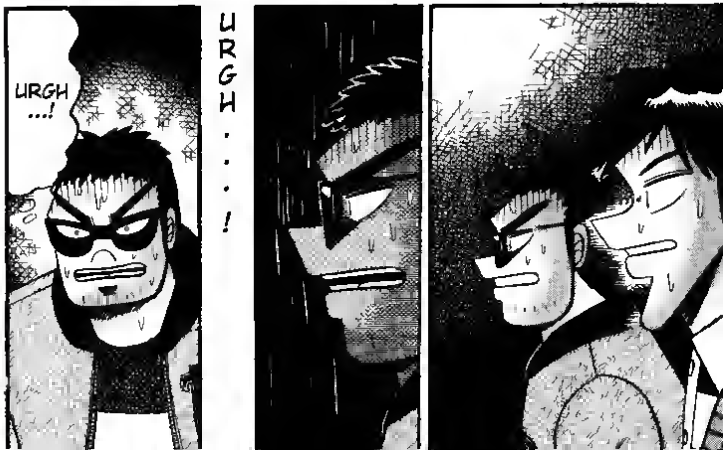
WOULD BE CRUSHED ...!
THAT WAS THE NATURAL THING TO ASSUME.
THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE OF 20000 BETWEEN HIM AND HARADA.
TO OVERCOME THAT...
GETTING A HAND LIKE THIS
IN THE TEN MINUTES LEFT...

WAS..... TOO MUCH TO HOPE FOR...!
THERE WAS NO HOPE OF IT HAPPENING...!
IT WASN'T JUST A MAYBE...
ANOTHER ONE OR TWO TIMES...!
AND THEN ...
A HAND LIKE THIS ONE WAS HIS LAST SHOT.
AT MOST .....
HIS CHANCES TO GET INTO TENPAI WERE

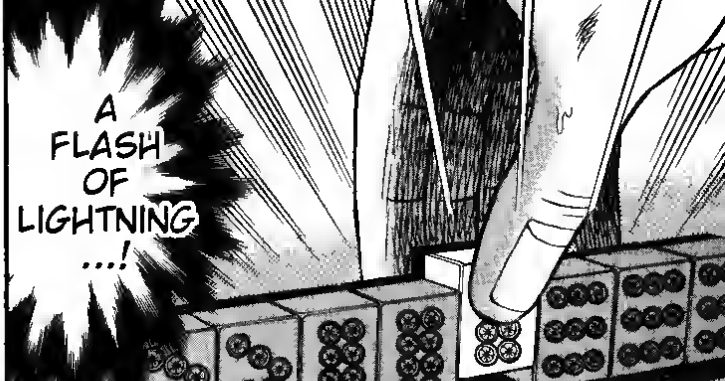
RIGHT HERE AND NOW ...

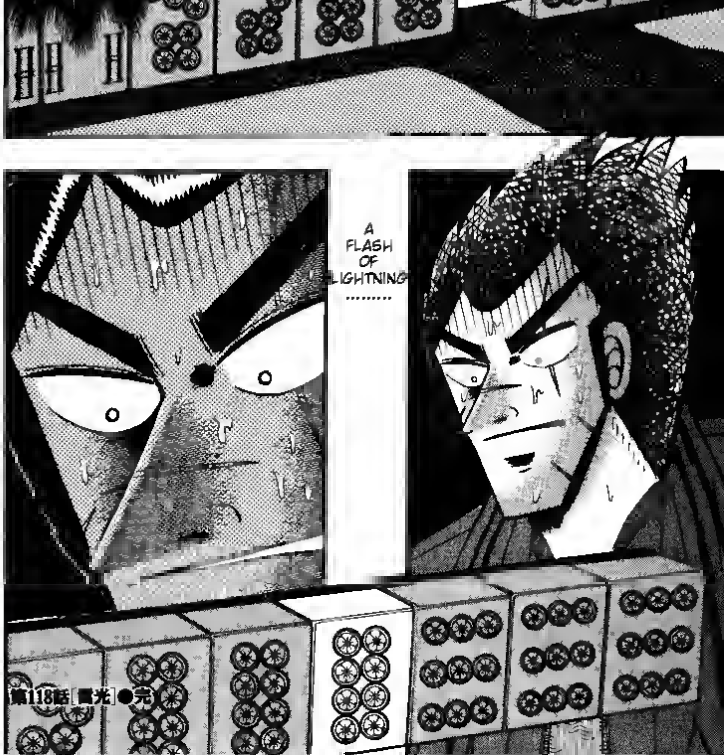



A FLASH OF LIGHTNING ...!


URGH ...!
URGH...!

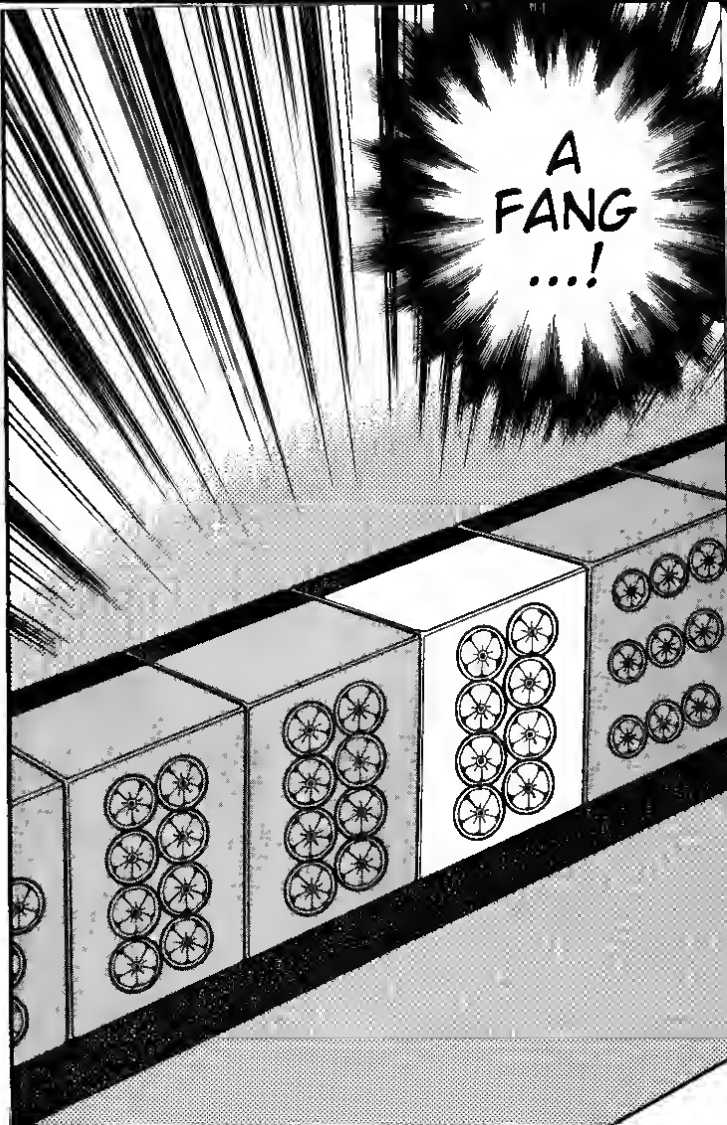
HE GOT IT oooo!


A FLASH OF LIGHTNING ...!

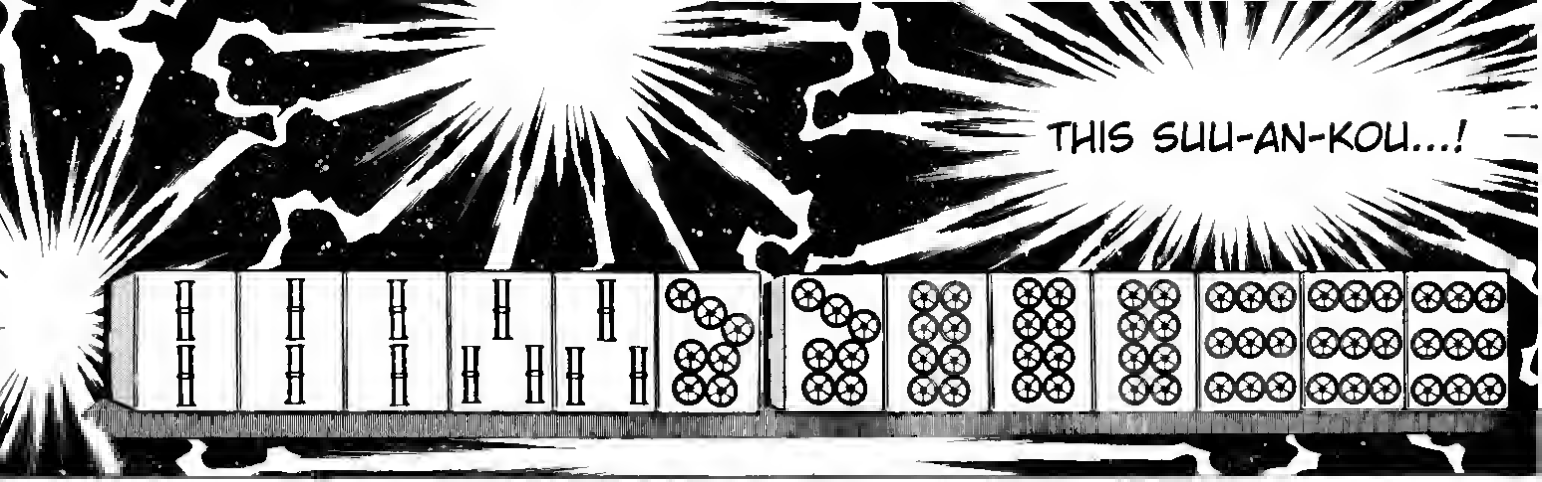

A FLASH OF LIGHTNING .....
第118話「雷光」●完

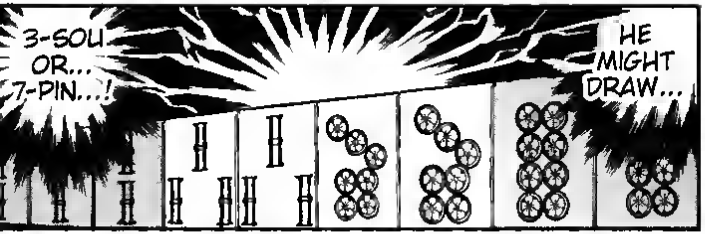
CHAPTER 119
ANOTHER CHOICE
ざわ

ざわ…
ざわ…
ざわ…
THIS IS...
WHAT'S GIVING HIM HOPE FOR A COMEBACK ...
THE FINAL PIECE... FOR SUU-AN-KOU .....
A MESSENGER ...!
AT THE LAST MOMENT, WITH TEN MINUTES LEFT
A CRITICAL POINT IN TIME...!
WITH THE CURTAIN JUST ABOUT TO FALL...
HE GOT IT...!


A
FANG
...!

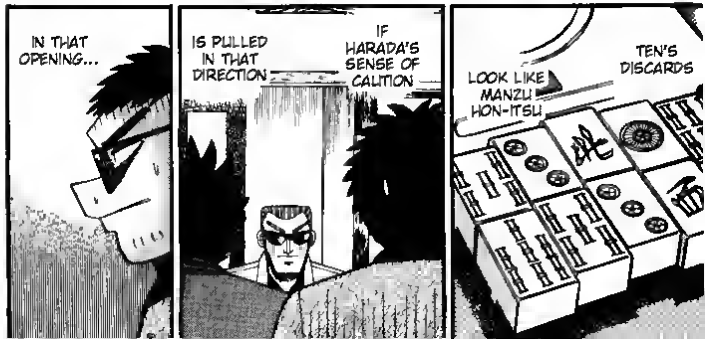
HARADA'S OVERWHELMINGLY SUPERIOR POSITION..!
A FANG THAT WOULD BREAK THROUGH
YES...
AFTER GETTING THIS FAR ALREADY WITH THIS HAND!
HE HAS TO GO FOR IT .....!
HAVE FAITH IN IT...!
HE'LL HAVE TO.....!


THIS SUU-AN-KOU...!

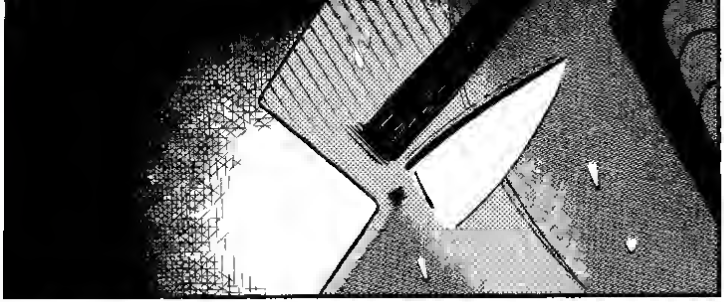

3-SOU OR... 7-PIN...!
HE MIGHT DRAW...

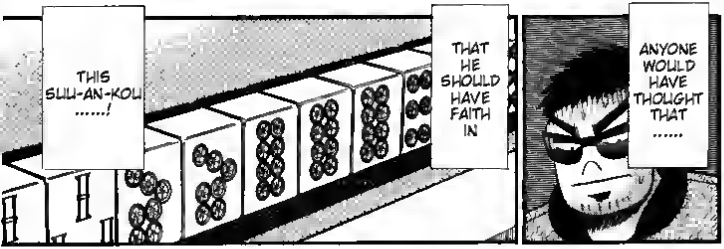
3-SOU OR 7-PIN ...!
HE WILL ...!
HE WILL DRAW IT.....!
NO .....

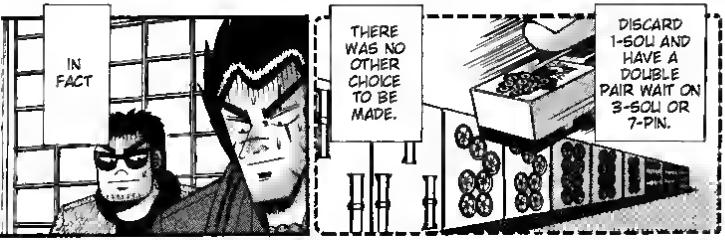
LUCKILY...
.....
.....
ITS FATE ...!
WHERE THIS LONG EAST-WEST BATTLE IS HEADING...

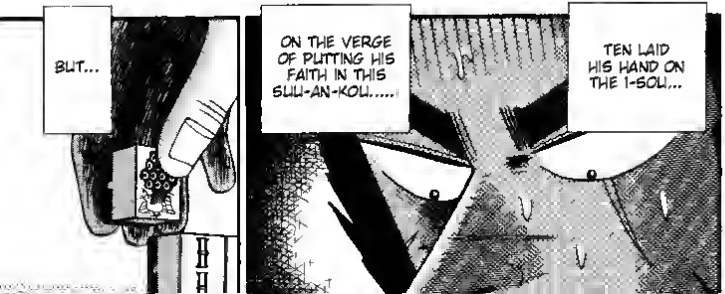

IN THAT OPENING...
IS PULLED IN THAT DIRECTION
IF HARADA'S SENSE OF CAUTION
LOOK LIKE MANZU HON-ITSU
TEN'S DISCARDS

3-SOU
OR
7-PIN
.....!



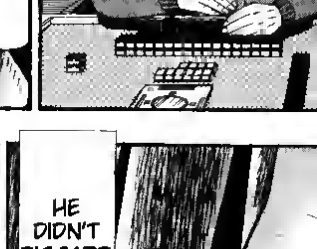

THIS SUU-AN-KOU ……!
THAT HE SHOULD HAVE FAITH IN
ANYONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT ……

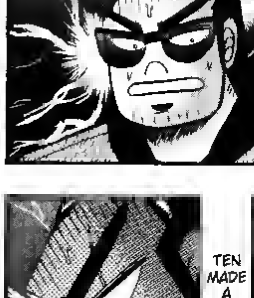

IN FACT
THERE WAS NO OTHER CHOICE TO BE MADE.
DISCARD 1-SOU AND HAVE A DOUBLE PAIR WAIT ON 3-SOU OR 7-PIN.


BUT…
ON THE VERGE OF PUTTING HIS FAITH IN THIS SUU-AN-KOU……
TEN LAID HIS HAND ON THE 1-SOU…

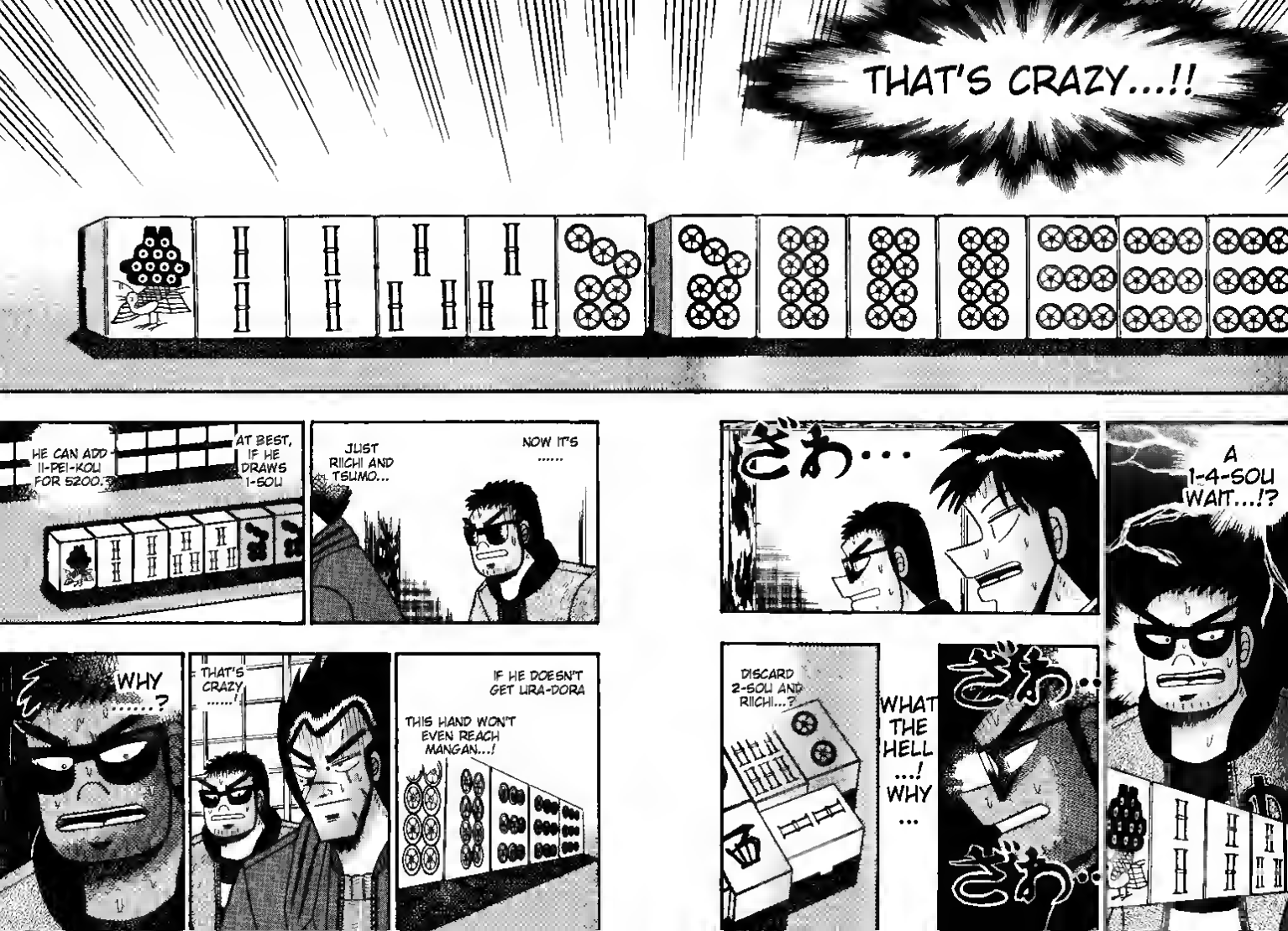
?.....

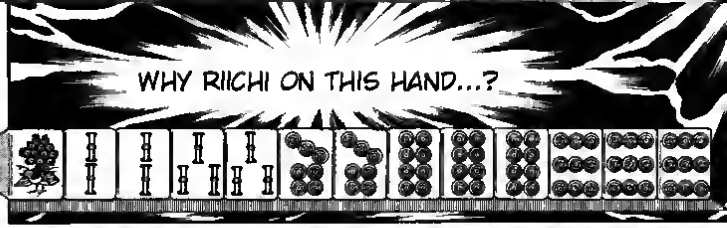
HE STAYED HIS HAND...!
HUH...?

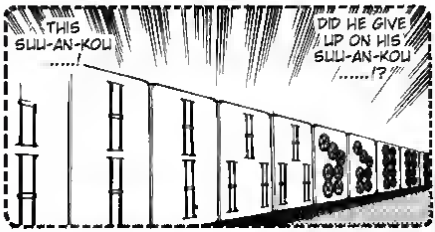

HE DIDN'T DISCARD IT...!


TEN MADE A DIFF-ERENT CHOICE ...!
HUUH ...!?

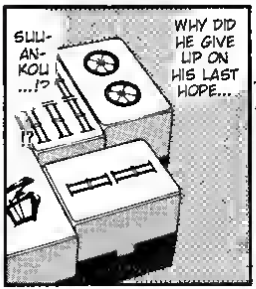
RIICHI ...!
PLAYING THE 2-SOU .....!
URGH ...!
GH ...!


THAT'S CRAZY...!!
HE CAN ADD II-PEI-KOU FOR 5200.
AT BEST, IF HE DRAWS 1-SOU
JUST RIICHI AND TSUMO...
NOW IT'S .....
WHY .....?
THAT'S CRAZY .....!
IF HE DOESN'T GET URA-DORA
THIS HAND WON'T EVEN REACH MANGAN...!
ざわ...
A 1-4-SOU WAIT...!?
DISCARD 2-SOU AND RIICHI...?
WHAT THE HELL ...! WHY ...
ざわ..
ざわ..


WHY RIICHI ON THIS HAND...?

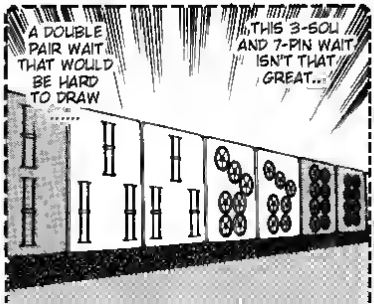

THIS SUU-AN-KOU .....!
DID HE GIVE UP ON HIS SUU-AN-KOU /.....!?

WHY ...

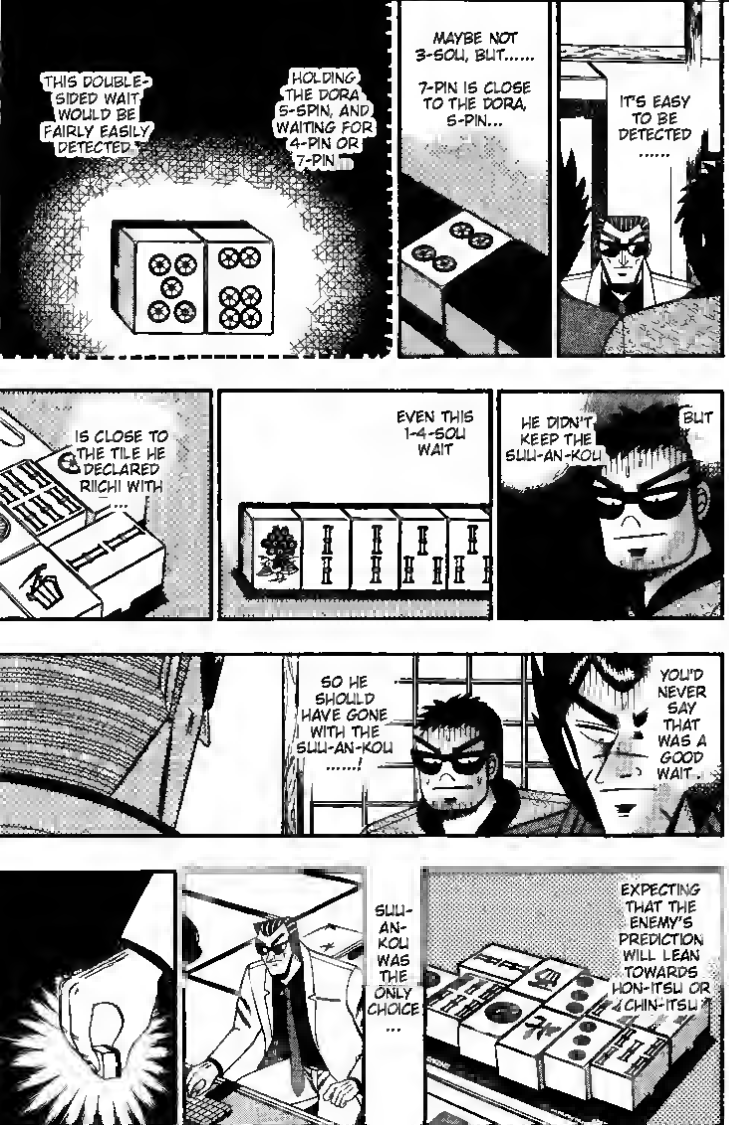

SUU-AN-KOU ...!?
!?
WHY DID HE GIVE UP ON HIS LAST HOPE...

IT'S UN-THINK ABLE .....!
UURGH ...!

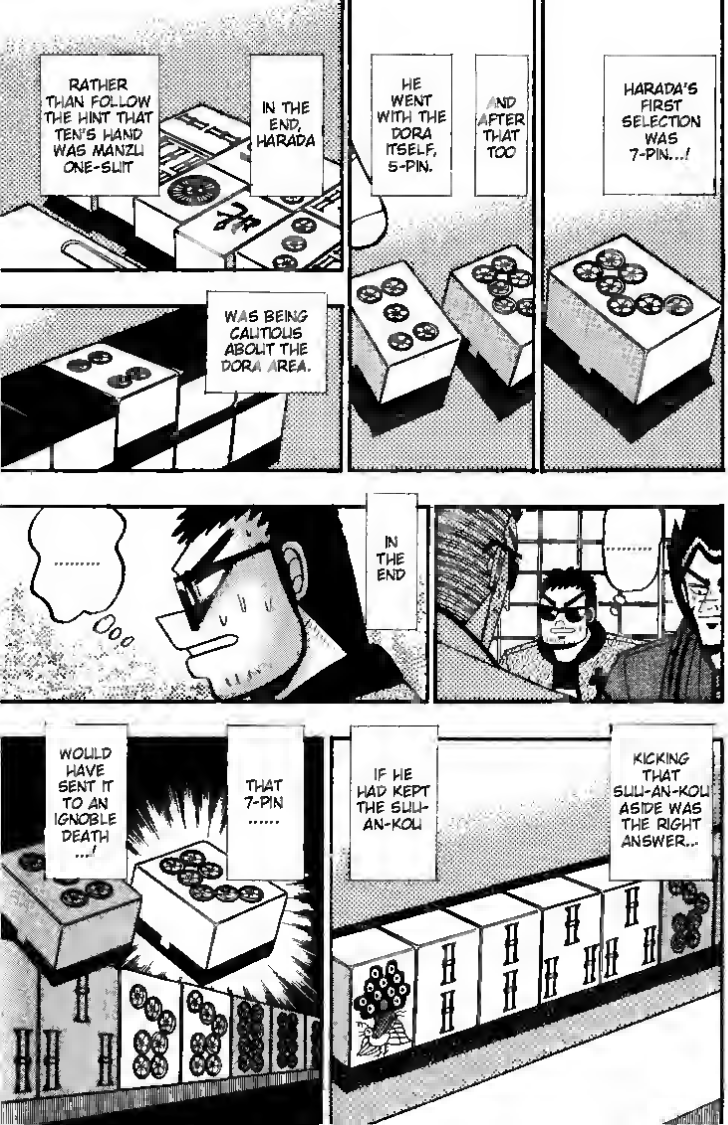
.....
.....


A DOUBLE PAIR WAIT THAT WOULD BE HARD TO DRAW .....
THIS 3-SOU AND 7-PIN WAIT ISN'T THAT GREAT...

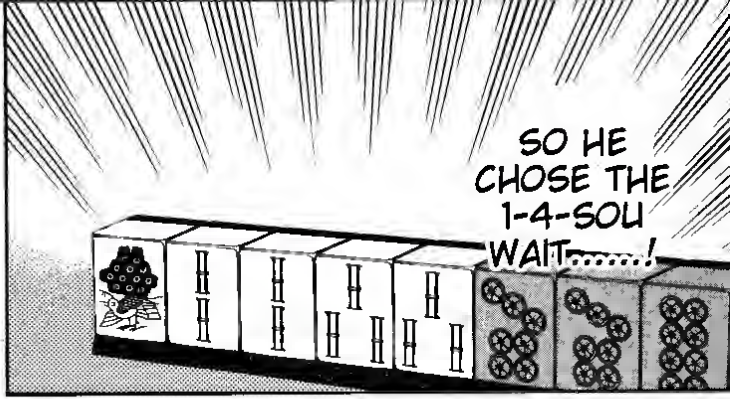
HE GOT THIS SUU-AN-KOU
..... WHEN .....


THIS DOUBLE-SIDED WAIT WOULD BE FAIRLY EASILY DETECTED
HOLDING THE DORA 5-SPIN, AND WAITING FOR 4-PIN OR 7-PIN
MAYBE NOT 3-SOU, BUT.....
7-PIN IS CLOSE TO THE DORA, 5-PIN...
IT'S EASY TO BE DETECTED .....
IS CLOSE TO THE TILE HE DECLARED RIICHI WITH ...
EVEN THIS 1-4-SOU WAIT
HE DIDN'T KEEP THE SUU-AN-KOU
BUT
SO HE SHOULD HAVE GONE WITH THE SUU-AN-KOU .....!
YOU'D NEVER SAY THAT WAS A GOOD WAIT.
SUU-AN-KOU WAS THE ONLY CHOICE ...
EXPECTING THAT THE ENEMY'S PREDICTION WILL LEAN TOWARDS HON-ITSU OR CHIN-ITSU

GH...!
BLIT
.....
ぎわ...
ぎわ...
ぎわ...
ULURGH
...!


RATHER THAN FOLLOW THE HINT THAT TEN'S HAND WAS MANZU ONE-SUIT
IN THE END, HARADA
HE WENT WITH THE DORA ITSELF, 5-PIN.
AND AFTER THAT TOO
HARADA'S FIRST SELECTION WAS 7-PIN...!
WAS BEING CAUTIOUS ABOUT THE DORA AREA.
.....
Ooo
IN THE END
.....
WOULD HAVE SENT IT TO AN IGNOBLE DEATH ...!
THAT 7-PIN .....
IF HE HAD KEPT THE SUU-AN-KOU
KICKING THAT SUU-AN-KOU ASIDE WAS THE RIGHT ANSWER..

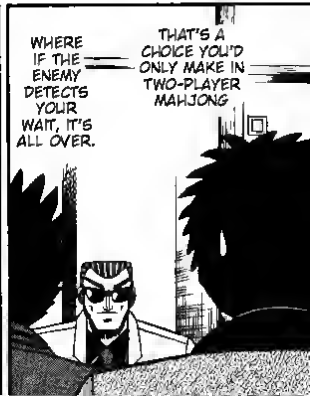
FORCED TO DIE AN IGNOBLE DEATH ...!
IN SHORT ...
THE WEIGHT OF THESE 7-PIN ...!
TEN DID ...!
I DIDN'T SEE IT, BUT...
.....
AS A RESULT ...!
TEN'S CHOICE WAS A SUCCESS ...!
WAS STRONG ...!
THE HINT OF THAT ...
HE KNEW THAT THE ENEMY WOULD PICK 7-PIN AT THE START ...
.....
SO THAT'S WHAT IT WAS ...!


SO HE CHOSE THE 1-4-SOU
WAIT.....!

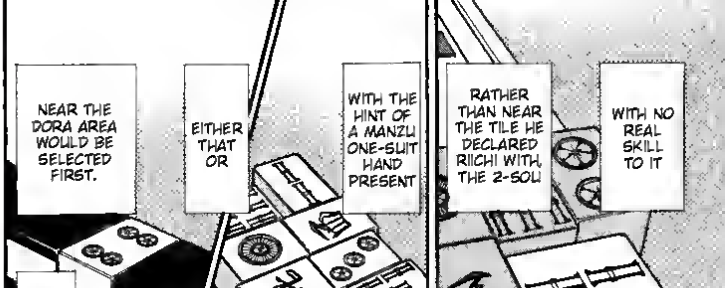
BUT...
IS WHAT HE MUST HAVE DECIDED...!

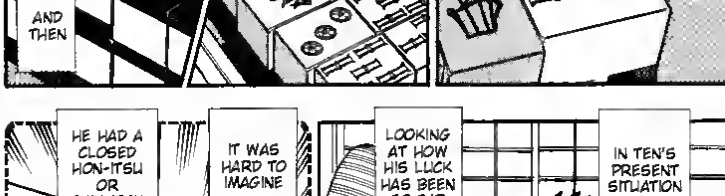
IS BETTER THAN A SUU-AN-KOU WITHOUT A CHANCE AT WINNING
LOWERING IT TO ANY KIND OF HAND.....

EVEN TEN WOULD HAVE KEPT THE SUU-AN-KOU ...
IF IT WAS NORMAL 4-PLAYER MAHJONG


WHERE IF THE ENEMY DETECTS YOUR WAIT, IT'S ALL OVER.
THAT'S A CHOICE YOU'D ONLY MAKE IN TWO-PLAYER MAHJONG

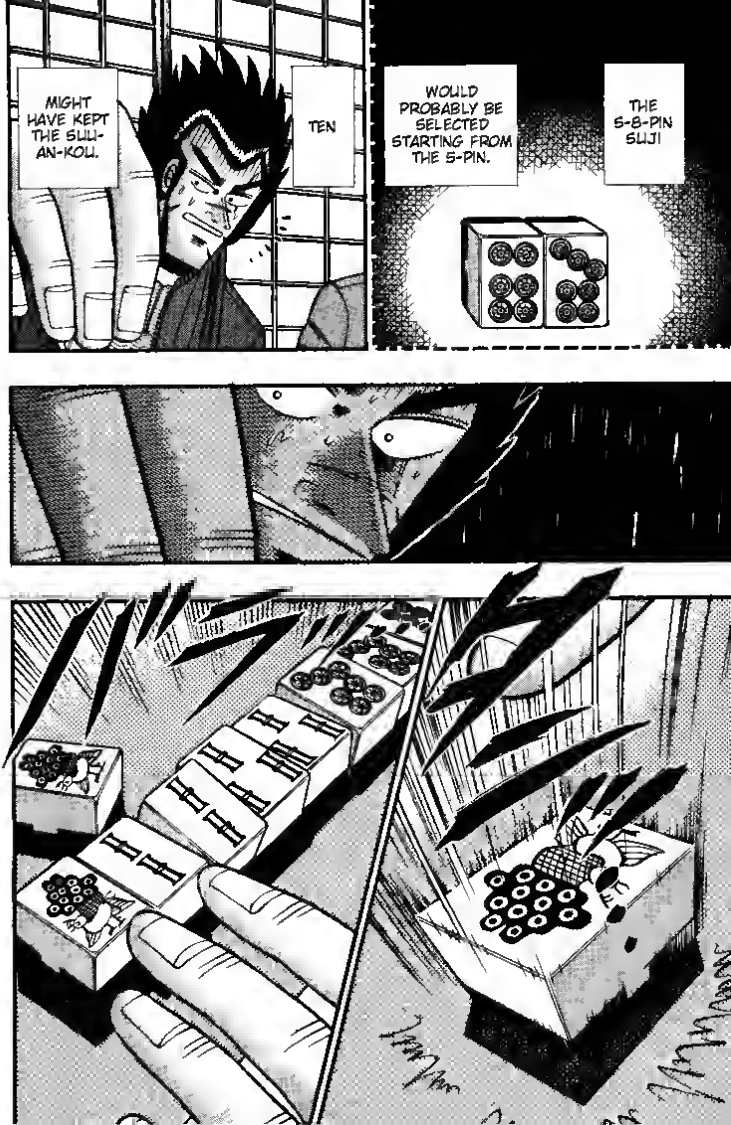
.....
YES....
TEN WAS CERTAIN OF IT.
RIGHT NOW HARADA WAS IN A GOOD POSITION, WITH A STRONG LEAD.....
THERE WAS NO NEED TO FORCE IT.
IN SHORT
MORE THAN JUST WIN
HE WAS TRYING TO CRUSH HIM.
HE HAD TO WIN WITH A HAND WORTH MORE THAN MANGAN .....
NARROWING DOWN THE TILES FOR SELECTION.
WHICH MEANT .....


NEAR THE DORA AREA WOULD BE SELECTED FIRST.
EITHER THAT OR
WITH THE HINT OF A MANZU ONE-SUIT HAND PRESENT
AND THEN
RATHER THAN NEAR THE TILE HE DECLARED RIICHI WITH, THE 2-SOU
WITH NO REAL SKILL TO IT

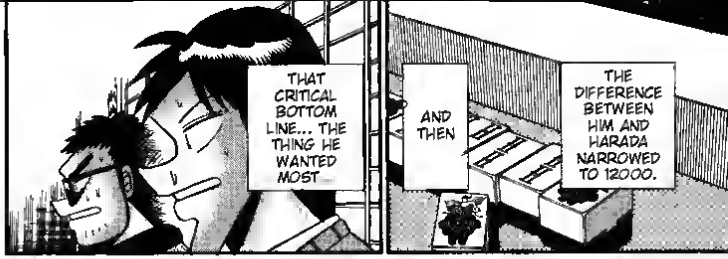

HE HAD A CLOSED HON-ITSU OR CHIN-ITSU
WITH-OUT DISC-ARDING A SINGLE MANZU TILE.
IT WAS HARD TO IMAGINE
LOOKING AT HOW HIS LUCK HAS BEEN SO FAR
IN TEN'S PRESENT SITUATION

THAT'S ONLY NATURAL.
IT WOULDN'T BE FOR A ONE-SUIT HAND .....
EVEN IF IT HAD BECOME A MANZU WAIT...
THE FIRST ONE HE PICKED WAS
IN THE DORA AREA
SO THEN ...

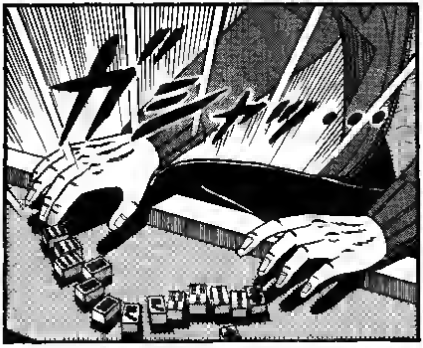
THAT WOULD BE THE FIRST THING HE'D BE LOOKING FOR.
WITH A DORA, THAT IS MANGAN.
RICHI, TAN-YAO, TSUMO.
THIS WOULD PROBABLY BE THE ORDER THEY CAME IN.
AND MANZU AFTER THAT.
IN SHORT, CHOOSE 5-PIN AND 7-PIN FIRST...
IF IT HAD BEEN 7-PIN INSTEAD OF 8-PIN
WHEN HE GOT INTO TENPAI
HE DIDN'T WANT THIS 7-PIN WAIT.
SO TEN PREDIC-TED
NO STRANGE TWISTS.
HARADA WAS MAKING STRAIGHT FORWARD PREDICT-IONS.
IF IT WAS WAITING ON 8-PIN OR 3-SOU
IN SHORT, THIS HAND


MIGHT HAVE KEPT THE SUU-AN-KOU.
TEN
WOULD PROBABLY BE SELECTED STARTING FROM THE 5-PIN.
THE 5-8-PIN SUJI

RIICHI, TSUMO, II-PEI-KOU .....!
THIS HAND OF TEN'S
ざわ..
ざわ..
ざわ..
6 DEALER STICKS WAS WORTH 1800 AND WITH RIICHI ADDED, THAT WAS ANOTHER 1000.
8000 TOTAL.
BUT
IT STOPPED AT 5200.
DIDN'T GET URA-DORA.


THAT CRITICAL BOTTOM LINE... THE THING HE WANTED MOST
AND THEN
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND HARADA NARROWED TO 12000.

THEY WOULD BE TIED ...!
IF TEN WON THE NEXT TIME WITH MANGAN
.....
HE GOT THE RIGHT TO BE THE DEALER .....!


FLIP...

FOR A CHANCE AT A COME-BACK .....!
GIVING UP THE SUU-AN-KOU BASED ON A REALISTIC PREDICTION

福本伸行

FUKUMOTO NOBUYUKI
Kindai Mahjong Comics

13

天

TEN

天和通りの快男児

TENHOU-DOORI NO KAIDANJI

THE NICE GUY ON THE PATH OF TENHOU

竹書房

TAKE SHOBO